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VOLUME XIII

LETTERS, JOURNALS, AND LIFE OF LORD BYRON

The Works of Lord Byron

With His Letters and Journals
and His Life by
THOMAS MOORE

Edited and with an Introduction by
RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

In Sixteen Volumes
Volume XIII.

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The Life of Lord Byron

During the interval of a year and a half which elapsed before Lord Byron's return, I had taken upon myself obligations, both as husband and father, which make most men — and especially those who have nothing to bequeath — less willing to expose themselves unnecessarily to danger. On hearing, therefore, of the arrival of the noble traveller from Greece, though still thinking it due to myself to follow up my first request of an explanation, I resolved, in prosecuting that object, to adopt such a tone of conciliation as should not only prove my sincere desire of a pacific result, but show the entire freedom from any angry or resentful feeling with which I took the step. The death of Mrs. Byron, for some time, delayed my purpose. But as soon after that event as was consistent with decorum, I addressed a letter to Lord Byron, in which, referring to my former communication, and expressing some doubts as to its having ever reached him, I restated, in pretty nearly the same

words, the nature of the insult which, as it appeared to me, the passage in his note was calculated to convey. "It is now useless," I continued, "to speak of the steps with which it was my intention to follow up that letter. The time which has elapsed since then, though it has done away neither the injury nor the feeling of it, has, in many respects, materially altered my situation; and the only object which I have now in writing to your lordship is to preserve some consistency with that former letter, and to prove to you that the injured feeling still exists, however circumstances may compel me to be deaf to its dictates, at present. When I say 'injured feeling,' let me assure your lordship, that there is not a single vindictive sentiment in my mind toward you. I mean but to express that uneasiness, under (what I consider to be) a charge of falsehood, which must haunt a man of any feeling to his grave, unless the insult be retracted or atoned for; and which, if I did *not* feel, I should, indeed, deserve far worse than your lordship's satire could inflict upon me." In conclusion I added that, so far from being influenced by any angry or resentful feeling toward him, it would give me sincere pleasure if, by any satisfactory explanation, he would enable me to seek the honour of being henceforward ranked among his acquaintance.[1]

To this letter, Lord Byron returned the following letter:

TO MR. MOORE.

"CAMBRIDGE, October 27, 1811.

"SIR: — Your letter followed me from Notts. to this place, which will account for the delay of my reply. Your former letter I never had the honour to receive; be assured, in whatever part of the world it had found me, I should have deemed it my duty to return and answer it in person.

"The advertisement you mention, I know nothing of. At the time of your meeting with Mr. Jeffrey, I had recently entered college, and remember to have heard and read a number of squibs on the occasion; and from the recollection of these I derived all my knowledge on the subject without the slightest idea of 'giving the lie' to an address which I never beheld. When I put my name to the production, which has occasioned this correspondence, I became responsible to all whom it might concern, — to explain where it requires explanation, and, where insufficiently, or too sufficiently explicit, at all events to satisfy. My situation leaves me no choice; it rests with the injured and the angry to obtain reparation in their own way.

"With regard to the passage in question, *you* were certainly *not* the person toward whom I felt personally hostile. On the contrary, my whole thoughts were engrossed by one whom I had

reason to consider as my worst literary enemy, nor could I foresee that his former antagonist was about to become his champion. You do not specify what you would wish to have done; I can neither retract nor apologise for a charge of falsehood which I never advanced.

"In the beginning of the week, I shall be at No. 8 St. James's Street. Neither the letter nor the friend to whom you stated your intention ever made their appearance.

"Your friend, Mr. Rogers, or any other gentleman delegated by you, will find me most ready to adopt any conciliatory proposition which shall not compromise my own honour, — or, failing in that, to make the atonement you deem it necessary to require.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"BYRON."

In my reply to this, I commenced by saying that his lordship's letter was, upon the whole, as satisfactory as I could expect. It contained all that, in the strict *diplomatique* of explanation, could be required, namely, that he had never seen the statement which I supposed him wilfully to have contradicted, that he had no intention of bringing against me any charge of falsehood, and that the objectionable passage of his work was not levelled personally at *me*. This, I added, was all

the explanation I had a right to expect, and I was, of course, satisfied with it.

I then entered into some detail relative to the transmission of my first letter from Dublin, giving, as my reason for descending to these minute particulars, that I did not, I must confess, feel quite easy under the manner in which his lordship had noticed the miscarriage of that first application to him.

My reply concluded thus: "As your lordship does not show any wish to proceed beyond the rigid formulary of explanation, it is not for me to make any further advances. We Irishmen, in businesses of this kind, seldom know any medium between decided hostility and decided friendship; but, as any approaches toward the latter alternative must now depend entirely on your lordship, I have only to repeat that I am satisfied with your letter, and that I have the honour to be," etc.

On the following day I received the annexed rejoinder from Lord Byron:

TO MR. MOORE.

"8 St. James's Street, October 29, 1811.

"Sir: — Soon after my return to England, my friend, Mr. Hodgson, apprised me that a letter for me was in his possession; but a domestic event hurrying me from London, immediately after, the letter (which may most probably be your own) is still *unopened in his keeping*. If, on examination

of the address, the similarity of the handwriting should lead to such a conclusion, it shall be opened in your presence, for the satisfaction of all parties. Mr. H. is at present out of town; on Friday I shall see him, and request him to forward it to my address.

"With regard to the latter part of both your letters, until the principal point was discussed between us, I felt myself at a loss in what manner to reply. Was I to anticipate friendship from one who conceived me to have charged him with falsehood? Were not *advances*, under such circumstances, to be misconstrued, — not, perhaps, by the person to whom they were addressed, but by others? In *my* case, such a step was impracticable. If you, who conceived yourself to be the offended person, are satisfied that you had no cause for offence, it will not be difficult to convince me of it. My situation, as I have before stated, leaves me no choice. I should have felt proud of your acquaintance, had it commenced under other circumstances; but it must rest with you to determine how far it may proceed after so *auspicious* a beginning. I have the honour to be," etc.

Somewhat piqued, I own, at the manner in which my efforts toward a more friendly understanding — ill-timed as I confess them to have been — were received, I hastened to close our correspondence by

a short note, saying that his lordship had made me feel the imprudence I was guilty of, in wandering from the point immediately in discussion between us; and I should now, therefore, only add, that if, in my last letter, I had correctly stated the substance of his explanation, our correspondence might from this moment cease for ever, as with that explanation I declared myself satisfied.

This brief note drew immediately from Lord Byron the following frank and open-hearted reply:

TO MR. MOORE.

"8 St. James's Street, October 30, 1811.

"Sir: — You must excuse my troubling you once more upon this very unpleasant subject. It would be a satisfaction to me, and I should think to yourself, that the unopened letter in Mr. Hodgson's possession (supposing it to prove your own) should be returned 'in statu quo' to the writer; particularly as you expressed yourself 'not quite easy under the manner in which I had dwelt on its miscarriage.'

"A few words more, and I shall not trouble you further. I felt, and still feel, very much flattered by those parts of your correspondence, which held out the prospect of our becoming acquainted. If I did not meet them in the first instance as perhaps I ought, let the situation I was placed in be my defence. You have *now* declared yourself *satisfied*, and on that point we are no longer at issue.

If, therefore, you still retain any wish to do me the honour you hinted at, I shall be most happy to meet you, when, where, and how you please, and I presume you will not attribute my saying thus much to any unworthy motive. I have the honour to remain," etc.

On receiving this letter, I went instantly to my friend, Mr. Rogers, who was, at that time, on a visit at Holland House, and, for the first time, informed him of the correspondence in which I had been engaged. With his usual readiness to oblige and serve, he proposed that the meeting between Lord Byron and myself should take place at his table, and requested of me to convey to the noble lord his wish, that he would do him the honour of naming some day for that purpose. The following is Lord Byron's answer to the note which I then wrote:

TO MR. MOORE.

"8 St. James's Street, November 1, 1811.

"Sir: — As I should be very sorry to interrupt your Sunday's engagement, if Monday, or any other day of the ensuing week, would be equally convenient to yourself and friend, I will then have the honour of accepting his invitation. Of the professions of esteem with which Mr. Rogers has honoured me, I cannot but feel proud, though undeserving. I should be wanting to myself, if insensible to the praise of such a man; and, should my approaching

interview with him and his friend lead to any degree of intimacy with both or either, I shall regard our past correspondence as one of the happiest events of my life. I have the honour to be,

"Your very sincere and obedient servant

"Byron."

It can hardly, I think, be necessary to call the reader's attention to the good sense, self-possession, and frankness, of these letters of Lord Byron. I had placed him — by the somewhat national confusion which I had made of the boundaries of peace and war, of hostility and friendship — in a position which, ignorant as he was of the character of the person who addressed him, it required all the watchfulness of his sense of honour to guard from surprise or snare. Hence, the judicious reserve with which he abstained from noticing my advances toward acquaintance, till he should have ascertained exactly whether the explanation which he was willing to give would be such as his correspondent would be satisfied to receive. The moment he was set at rest on this point, the frankness of his nature displayed itself; and the disregard of all further mediation or etiquette with which he at once professed himself ready to meet me, "when, where, and how" I pleased, showed that he could be as pliant and confiding *after* such an understanding, as he had been judiciously reserved and punctilious *before* it.

Such did I find Lord Byron, on my first experience of him: and such — so open and manly-minded — did I find him to the last.

It was, at first, intended by Mr. Rogers that his company at dinner should not extend beyond Lord Byron and myself; but Mr. Thomas Campbell, having called upon our host that morning, was invited to join the party, and consented. Such a meeting could not be otherwise than interesting to us all. It was the first time that Lord Byron was ever seen by any of his three companions; while he, on his side, for the first time, found himself in the society of persons, whose names had been associated with his first literary dreams, and to *two*[2] of whom he looked up with that tributary admiration which youthful genius is ever ready to pay its precursors.

Among the impressions which this meeting left upon me, what I chiefly remember to have remarked was the nobleness of his air, his beauty, the gentleness of his voice and manners, and — what was, naturally, not the least attraction — his marked kindness to myself. Being in mourning for his mother, the colour, as well of his dress, as of his glossy, curling, and picturesque hair, gave more effect to the pure, spiritual paleness of his features, in the expression of which, when he spoke, there was a perpetual play of lively thought, though melancholy was their habitual character when in repose.

As we had none of us been apprised of his peculiarities with respect to food, the embarrassment of our host was not a little, on discovering that there was nothing upon the table which his noble guest could eat or drink. Neither meat, fish, nor wine, would Lord Byron touch; and of biscuits and soda-water, which he asked for, there had been, unluckily no provision. He professed, however, to be equally well pleased with potatoes and vinegar; and of these meagre materials contrived to make rather a hearty dinner.

I shall now resume the series of his correspondence with other friends.

TO MR. HARNESS.

"8 St. James's Street, December 6, 1811.

"My dear Harness: — I write again, but don't suppose I mean to lay such a tax on your pen and patience as to expect regular replies. When you are inclined, write; when silent, I shall have the consolation of knowing that you are much better employed. Yesterday, Bland and I called on Mr. Miller, who, being then out, will call on Bland[3] to-day or to-morrow. I shall certainly endeavour to bring them together. You are censorious, child; when you are a little older, you will learn to dislike everybody, but abuse nobody.

"With regard to the person of whom you speak, your own good sense must direct you. I never pretend to advise, being an implicit believer in

the old proverb. This present frost is detestable. It is the first I have felt for these three years, though I longed for one in the Oriental summer, when no such thing is to be had, unless I had gone to the top of Hymettus for it.

"I thank you most truly for the concluding part of your letter. I have been of late not much accustomed to kindness from any quarter, and am not the less pleased to meet with it again from one where I had known it earliest. I have not changed in all my ramblings, — Harrow, and, of course, yourself, never left me, and the

"'Dulces reminiscitur Argos'

attended me to the very spot to which that sentence alludes in the mind of the fallen Argive. Our intimacy began before we began to date at all, and it rests with you to continue it till the hour which must number it and me with the things that *were*.

"Do read mathematics. I should think *X plus Y* at least as amusing as the 'Curse of Kehama,' and much more intelligible. Master S.'s poems *are*, in fact, what parallel lines might be — viz. prolonged *ad infinitum* without meeting anything half so absurd as themselves.

"What news, what news? Queen Oreaca,
What news of scribblers five?
S——, W——, C——e, L—d, and L—e?—
All damned, though yet alive.

C——e is lecturing. 'Many an old fool,' said Hannibal to some such lecturer, 'but such as this, never.' Ever yours," etc.

TO MR. HARNESS.

"St. James's Street, December 8, 1811.

"Behold a most formidable sheet, without gilt or black edging, and consequently very vulgar and indecorous, particularly to one of your precision; but this being Sunday, I can procure no better, and will atone for its length by not filling it. Bland I have not seen since my last letter; but on Tuesday he dines with me, and will meet M——e, the epitome of all that is exquisite in poetical or personal accomplishments. How Bland has settled with Miller, I know not. I have very little interest with either, and they must arrange their concerns according to their own gusto. I have done my endeavours, *at your request*, to bring them together, and hope they may agree to their mutual advantage.

"Coleridge has been lecturing against Campbell. Rogers was present, and from him I derive the information. We are going to make a party to hear this Manichean of poesy. Pole is to marry Miss Long, and will be a very miserable dog for all that. The present ministers are to continue, and his Majesty *does* continue in the same state; so there's folly and madness for you, both in a breath.

"I never heard of but one man truly fortunate, and he was Beaumarchais, the author of 'Figaro,' who buried two wives and gained three lawsuits before he was thirty.

"And now, child, what art thou doing? *Reading, I trust.* I want to see you take a degree. Remember, this is the most important period of your life; and don't disappoint your papa and your aunt, and all your kin — besides myself. Don't you know that all male children are begotten for the express purpose of being graduates? and that even I am an A. M., though how I became so, the public orator only can resolve. Besides, you are to be a priest; and to confute Sir William Drummond's late book about the Bible (printed, but not published), and all other infidels whatever. Now leave Master H.'s gig, and Master S.'s Sapphics, and become as immortal as Cambridge can make you.

"You see, *mio carissimo*, what a pestilent correspondent I am likely to become; but then you shall be as quiet at Newstead as you please, and I won't disturb your studies as I do now. When do you fix the day, that I may take you up according to contract? Hodgson talks of making a third in our journey; but we can't stow him, inside at least. Positively you shall go with me as was agreed, and don't let me have any of your *politesse* to H. on the occasion. I shall manage to arrange for both with a little contrivance. I wish H. was not quite so fat, and we should pack better. You

will want to know what I am doing — chewing tobacco.

"You see nothing of my allies, Scrope Davies and Matthews[4] — they don't suit you; and how does it happen that I — who am a pipkin of the same pottery — continue in your good graces? Good night, — I will go on in the morning.

"Dec. 9th. In a morning, I'm always sullen, and to-day is as sombre as myself. Rain and mist are worse than a sirocco, particularly in a beef-eating and beer-drinking country. My bookseller, Cawthorn, has just left me, and tells me, with a most important face, that he is in treaty for a novel of Madame D'Arblay's, for which one thousand guineas are asked! He wants me to read the MS. (if he obtains it), which I shall do with pleasure; but I should be very cautious in venturing an opinion on her whose 'Cecilia' Doctor Johnson superintended.[5] If he lends it to me, I shall put it into the hands of Rogers and M——e, who are truly men of taste. I have filled the sheet, and beg your pardon; I will not do it again. I shall, perhaps, write again, but if not, believe, silent or scribbling, that I am, my dearest William, ever," etc.

TO MR. HODGSON.

"London, December 8, 1811.

"I sent you a sad 'Tale of Three Friars' the other day, and now take a dose in another style. I

wrote it a day or two ago, on hearing a song of former days.

"'Away, away, ye notes of woe,'[6] etc.,

"I have gotten a book by Sir W. Drummond (printed, but not published), entitled 'Œdipus Judaicus,' in which he attempts to prove the greater part of the Old Testament an allegory, particularly Genesis and Joshua. He professes himself a theist in the preface, and handles the literal interpretation very roughly. I wish you could see it. Mr. W—— has lent it me, and I confess, to me it is worth fifty Watsons.

"You and Harness must fix on the time for your visit to Newstead; I can command mine at your wish, unless anything particular occurs in the interim. Bland dines with me on Tuesday to meet Moore. Coleridge has attacked the 'Pleasures of Hope,' and all other pleasures whatsoever. Mr. Rogers was present, and heard himself indirectly *rowed* by the lecturer. We are going in a party to hear the new 'Art of Poetry' by this reformed schismatic; and were I one of these poetical luminaries, or of sufficient consequence to be noticed by the man of lectures, I should not hear him without an answer. For you know, 'an' a man will be beaten with brains, he shall never keep a clean doublet.' C—— will be desperately annoyed. I never saw a man (and of him I have seen very little) so sensitive; what a happy

temperament! I am sorry for it; what can *he* fear from criticism? I don't know if Bland has seen Miller, who was to call on him yesterday.

"To-day is the Sabbath, — a day I never pass pleasantly, but at Cambridge; and, even there, the organ is a sad remembrancer. Things are stagnant enough in town, — as long as they don't retrogade, 'tis all very well. H—— writes and writes and writes, and is an author. I do nothing but eschew tobacco. I wish Parliament were assembled, that I may hear, and perhaps some day be heard; but on this point I am not very sanguine. I have many plans; sometimes I think of the East again, and dearly beloved Greece. I am well, but weakly. Yesterday Kinnaird told me I looked very ill, and sent me home happy.

". . . Is Scrope still interesting and invalid? And how does Hinde with his cursed chemistry? To Harness I have written, and he has written, and we have all written, and have nothing now to do but write again, till death splits up the pen and the scribbler.

"The Alfred has three hundred and fifty-four candidates for six vacancies. The cook has run away and left us liable, which makes our committee very plaintive. Master Brook, our head serving-man, has the gout, and our new cook is none of the best. I speak from report, — for what is cookery to a leguminous-eating ascetic? So now you know as much of the matter as I do. Books

and quiet are still there, and they may dress their dishes in their own way for me. Let me know your determination as to Newstead, and believe me,

"Yours ever, Μπαιρῶν."

TO MR. HODGSON.

"8 St. James's Street, December 12, 1811.

"Why, Hodgson! I fear you have left off wine and me at the same time, — I have written and written and written, and no answer! My dear Sir Edgar, water disagrees with you, — drink sack and write. Bland did not come to his appointment, being unwell, but M——e supplied all other vacancies most delectably. I have hopes of his joining us at Newstead. I am sure you would like him more and more as he develops, — at least I do.

"How Miller and Bland go on, I don't know. Cawthorn talks of being in treaty for a novel of Me D'Arblay's, and if he obtains it (at 1,500 gs.!) wishes me to see the MS. This I should read with pleasure, — not that I should ever dare to venture a criticism on her whose writings Doctor Johnson once revised, but for the pleasure of the thing. If my worthy publisher wanted a sound opinion, I should send the MS. to Rogers and M——e, as men most alive to true taste. I have had frequent letters from Wm. Harness, and *you* are silent; certes, you are not a schoolboy. However, I have the consolation of knowing that you are better employed, viz. reviewing. You don't deserve that

I should add another syllable, and I won't. Yours, etc.

"P. S. I only wait for your answer to fix our meeting."

TO MR. HARNESS.

"8 St. James's Street, December 15, 1811.

"I wrote you an answer to your last, which, on reflection, pleases me as little as it probably has pleased yourself. I will not wait for your rejoinder; but proceed to tell you, that I had just then been greeted with an epistle of ———'s, full of his petty grievances, and this at the moment when (from circumstances it is not necessary to enter upon) I was bearing up against recollections to which *his* imaginary sufferings are as a scratch to a cancer. These things combined, put me out of humour with him and all mankind. The latter part of my life has been a perpetual struggle against affections which embittered the earliest portion; and though I flatter myself I have in a great measure conquered them, yet there are moments (and this was one) when I am as foolish as formerly. I never said so much before, nor had I said this now, if I did not suspect myself of having been rather savage in my letter, and wish to inform you thus much of the cause. You know I am not one of your dolorous gentlemen: so now let us laugh again.

"Yesterday I went with Moore to Sydenham to visit Campbell.[7] He was not visible, so we jogged homeward, merrily enough. To-morrow I dine with Rogers, and am to hear Coleridge, who is a kind of rage at present. Last night I saw Kemble in Coriolanus: he *was glorious*, and exerted himself wonderfully. By good luck I got an excellent place in the best part of the house, which was more than overflowing, Clare and Delawarre, who were there on the same speculation, were less fortunate. I saw them by accident, — we were not together. I wished for you, to gratify your love of Shakespeare and of fine acting to its fullest extent. Last week I saw an exhibition of a different kind in a Mr. Coates, at the Haymarket, who performed Lothario in a *damned* and damnable manner.

"I told you the fate of B. and H. in my last. So much for these sentimentalists, who console themselves in their stews for the loss — the never to be recovered loss — the despair of the refined attachment of a couple of drabs! You censure *my* life, Harness, — when I compare myself with these men, my elders and my betters, I really begin to conceive myself a monument of prudence — a walking statue — without feeling or failing; and yet the world in general hath given me a proud preëminence over them in profligacy. Yet I like the men, and, God knows, ought not to condemn their aberrations. But I own I feel provoked when they dignify all this by the name of *love* —

romantic attachments for things marketable for a dollar!

"Dec. 16th. I have just received your letter; I feel your kindness very deeply. The foregoing part of my letter, written yesterday, will, I hope, account for the tone of the former, though it cannot excuse it. I do *like* to hear from you — more than *like*. Next to seeing you, I have no greater satisfaction. But you have other duties, and greater pleasures, and I should regret to take a moment from either. H—— was to call to-day, but I have not seen him. The circumstances you mention at the close of your letter is another proof in favour of my opinion of mankind. Such you will always find them, — selfish and distrustful. I except none. The cause of this is the state of society. In the world, every one is to stir for himself — it is useless, perhaps selfish, to expect anything from his neighbour. But I do not think we are born of this disposition: for you find *friendship* as a schoolboy, and *love* enough before twenty.

"I went to see ———; he keeps me in town, where I don't wish to be at present. He is a good man, but totally without conduct. And now, my dearest William, I must wish you good morrow, and remain ever, most sincerely and affectionately yours," etc.

From the time of our first meeting, there seldom elapsed a day that Lord Byron and I did not see

each other; and our acquaintance ripened into intimacy and friendship with a rapidity of which I have seldom known an example. I was, indeed, lucky in all the circumstances that attended my first introduction to him. In a generous nature like his, the pleasure of repairing an injustice would naturally give a zest to any partiality I might have inspired in his mind; while the manner in which I had sought this reparation, free as it was from resentment or defiance, left nothing painful to remember in the transaction between us, — no compromise or concession that could wound self-love, or take away from the grace of that frank friendship to which he at once, so cordially and so unhesitatingly, admitted me. I was also not a little fortunate in forming my acquaintance with him, before his success had yet reached its meridian burst, — before the triumphs that were in store for him had brought the world all in homage at his feet, and, among the splendid crowds that courted his society, even claims less humble than mine had but a feeble chance of fixing his regard. As it was, the new scene of life that opened upon him with his success, instead of detaching us from each other, only multiplied our opportunities of meeting, and increased our intimacy. In that society where his birth entitled him to move, circumstances had already placed me, notwithstanding mine; and when, after the appearance of "Childe Harold," he began to

mingle with the world, the same persons, who had long been *my* intimates and friends, became his; our visits were mostly to the same places, and, in the gay and giddy round of a London spring, we were generally (as in one of his own letters he expresses it) "embarked in the same Ship of Fools together."

But, at the same time when we first met, his position in the world was most solitary. Even those coffee-house companions who, before his departure from England, had served him as a sort of substitute for more worthy society, were either relinquished or had dispersed; and, with the exception of three or four associates of his college days (to whom he appeared strongly attached), Mr. Dallas and his solicitor seemed to be the only persons whom, even in their very questionable degree, he could boast of as friends. Though too proud to complain of this loneliness, it was evident that he felt it; and that the state of cheerless isolation, "unguided and unfriended," to which, on entering into manhood, he had found himself abandoned, was one of the chief sources of that resentful disdain of mankind, which even their subsequent worship of him came too late to remove. The effect, indeed, which his subsequent commerce with society had, for the short period it lasted, in softening and exhilarating his temper, showed how fit a soil his heart would have been for the growth of all the kindlier feelings, had

but a portion of this sunshine of the world's smiles shone on him earlier.

At the same time, in all such speculations and conjectures as to what *might* have been, under more favourable circumstances, his character, it is invariably to be borne in mind, that his very defects were among the elements of his greatness, and that it was out of the struggle between the good and evil principles of his nature that his mighty genius drew its strength. A more genial and fostering introduction into life, while it would doubtless have softened and disciplined his mind, might have impaired its vigour; and the same influences that would have diffused smoothness and happiness over his life might have been fatal to its glory. In a short poem of his,[8] which appears to have been produced at Athens (as I find it written on a leaf of the original MS. of "Childe Harold," and dated "Athens, 1811"), there are two lines which, though hardly intelligible as connected with the rest of the poem, may, taken separately, be interpreted as implying a sort of prophetic consciousness that it was out of the wreck and ruin of all his hopes the immortality of his name was to arise.

"Dear object of defeated care,
Though now of love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair,
Thine image and my tears are left.
'Tis said with sorrow Time can cope,
But this, I feel, can ne'er be true;

For, *by the death-blow of my hope,*
My Memory immortal grew!"

We frequently, during the first months of our acquaintance, dined together alone; and as we had no club, in common, to resort to, — the Alfred being the only one to which he, at that period, belonged, and I being then a member of none but Watier's, — our dinners used to be either at the St. Alban's, or at his old haunt, Stevens's. Though at times he would drink freely enough of claret, he still adhered to his system of abstinence in food. He appeared, indeed, to have conceived a notion that animal food has some peculiar influence on the character; and I remember, one day, as I sat opposite to him, employed, I suppose, rather earnestly over a beefsteak, after watching me for a few seconds, he said, in a grave tone of inquiry, "Moore, don't you find eating beefsteak makes you ferocious?"

Understanding me to have expressed a wish to become a member of the Alfred, he very good-naturedly lost no time in proposing me as a candidate; but as the resolution which I had then nearly formed of betaking myself to a country life rendered an additional club in London superfluous, I wrote to beg that he would, for the present, at least, withdraw my name; and his answer, though containing little, being the first familiar note he ever honoured me with, I may be excused for feeling a peculiar pleasure in inserting it.

TO MR. MOORE.

"December 11, 1811.

"MY DEAR MOORE: — If you please, we will drop our former monosyllables, and adhere to the appellations sanctioned by our godfathers and godmothers. If you make it a point, I will withdraw your name; at the same time there is no occasion, as I have this day postponed your election 'sine die,' till it shall suit your wishes to be amongst us. I do not say this from any awkwardness the erasure of your proposal would occasion to *me*, but simply such is the state of the case; and, indeed, the longer your name is up, the stronger will become the probability of success, and your voters more numerous. Of course you will decide, — your wish shall be my law. If my zeal has already outrun discretion, pardon me, and attribute my officiousness to an excusable motive.

"I wish you would go down with me to Newstead. Hodgson will be there, and a young friend, named Harness, the earliest and dearest I ever had from the third form at Harrow to this hour. I can promise you good wine, and, if you like shooting, a manor of four thousand acres, fires, books, your own free will, and my own very indifferent company. 'Balnea, vina . . .'

"Hodgson will plague you, I fear, with verse; for my own part I will conclude, with Martial, 'nil recitabo tibi;' and surely the last inducement is

not the least. Ponder on my proposition, and believe me, my dear Moore, yours ever,

"BYRON."

Among those acts of generosity and friendship by which every year of Lord Byron's life was signalised, there is none, perhaps, that, for its own peculiar seasonableness and delicacy, as well as for the perfect worthiness of the person who was the object of it, deserves more honourable mention than that which I am now about to record, and which took place nearly at the period of which I am speaking. The friend whose good fortune it was to inspire the feeling thus testified, was Mr. Hodgson, the gentleman to whom so many of the preceding letters are addressed; and as it would be unjust to rob him of the grace and honour of being, himself, the testimony of obligations so signal, I shall here lay before my readers an extract from the letter with which, in reference to a passage in one of his noble friend's journals, he has favoured me.

"I feel it incumbent upon me to explain the circumstances to which this passage alludes, however private their nature. They are, indeed, calculated to do honour to the memory of my lamented friend. Having become involved, unfortunately, in difficulties and embarrassments, I received from Lord Byron (besides former pecuniary obligations) assistance, at the time in question, to the amount of a

thousand pounds. Aid of such magnitude was equally unsolicited and unexpected on my part; but it was a long-cherished, though secret, purpose of my friend to afford that aid; and he only waited for the period when he thought it would be of most service. His own words were, on the occasion of conferring this overwhelming favour, '*I always intended to do it.*'"

During all this time, and through the months of January and February, his poem of "Childe Harold" was in its progress through the press; and to the changes and additions which he made in the course of printing, some of the most beautiful passages of the work owe their existence. On comparing, indeed, his rough draft of the two cantos with the finished form in which they exist at present, we are made sensible of the power which the man of genius possesses, not only of surpassing others, but of improving on himself. Originally, the "little Page" and "Yeoman" of the Childe were introduced to the reader's notice in the following tame stanzas, by expanding the substance of which into their present light, lyric shape, it is almost needless to remark how much the poet has gained in variety and dramatic effect:

"And of his train there was a henchman page,
A peasant boy, who served his master well;
And often would his pranksome prate engage
Childe Burun's ear,[9] when his proud heart did swell

With sullen thoughts that he disdained to tell.
Then would he smile on him, and Alwin [10] smiled,
When aught that from his young lips archly fell,
The gloomy film from Harold's eye beguiled.

"Him and one yeoman only did he take
To travel eastward to a far countrie;
And, though the boy was grieved to leave the lake,
On whose fair banks he grew from infancy,
Eftsoons his little heart beat merrily,
With hope of foreign nations to behold,
And many things right marvellous to see,
Of which our vaunting travellers oft have told,
From Mandeville . . . . " [11]

In place of that mournful song "To Ines," in the first canto, which contains some of the dreariest touches of sadness that even his pen ever let fall, he had, in the original construction of the poem, been so little fastidious as to content himself with such ordinary singsong as the following:

"Oh never tell again to me
Of Northern climes and British ladies,
It has not been your lot to see,
Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz,
Although her eye be not of blue,
Nor fair her locks, like English lasses," etc.

There were also, originally, several stanzas full of direct personality, and some that degenerated into a style still more familiar and ludicrous than that of the description of a London Sunday, which

still disfigures the poem. In thus mixing up the light with the solemn, it was the intention of the poet to imitate Ariosto. But it is far easier to rise, with grace, from the level of a strain generally familiar, into an occasional short burst of pathos or splendour, than to interrupt thus a prolonged tone of solemnity by any descent into the ludicrous or burlesque.[12] In the former case, the transition may have the effect of softening or elevating, while, in the latter, it almost invariably shocks: for the same reason, perhaps, that a trait of pathos or high feeling, in comedy, has a peculiar charm; while the intrusion of comic scenes into tragedy, however sanctioned among us by habit and authority, rarely fails to offend. The noble poet was, himself, convinced of the failure of the experiment, and in none of the succeeding cantos of "Childe Harold" repeated it.

Of the satiric parts, some verses on the well-known traveller, Sir John Carr, may supply us with, at least, a harmless specimen:

"Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,
Sights, saints, antiques, arts, anecdotes, and war,
Go, hie ye hence to Paternoster Row, —
Are they not written in the boke of Carr?
Green Erin's Knight, and Europe's wandering star.
Then listen, readers, to the Man of Ink,
Hear what he did, and sought, and wrote afar:
All these are cooped within one Quarto's brink,
This borrow, steal (don't buy), and tell us what you think."

Among those passages which, in the course of revisal, he introduced, like pieces of "rich inlay," into the poem, was that fine stanza:

> "Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be
> A land of souls beyond that sable shore," etc.,

through which lines, though, it must be confessed, a tone of skepticism breathes (as well as in those tender verses:

> "Yes, — I will dream that we may meet again"),

it is a skepticism whose sadness calls far more for pity than blame; there being discoverable, even through its very doubts, an innate warmth of piety, which they had been able to obscure, but not to chill. To use the words of the poet himself, in a note which it was once his intention to affix to these stanzas, "Let it be remembered that the spirit they breathe is desponding, not sneering, skepticism," — a distinction never to be lost sight of; as, however hopeless may be the conversion of the scoffing infidel, he who feels pain in doubting has still alive within him the seeds of belief.

At the same time with "Childe Harold," he had three other works in the press, — his "Hints from Horace," "The Curse of Minerva," and a fifth edition of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." The note upon the latter poem,

which had been the lucky origin of our acquaintance, was withdrawn in this edition, and a few words of explanation, which he had the kindness to submit to my perusal, substituted in its place.

In the month of January, the whole of the two cantos being printed off, some of the poet's friends, and, among others, Mr. Rogers and myself, were so far favoured as to be indulged with a perusal of the sheets. In adverting to this period in his "Memoranda," Lord Byron, I remember, mentioned — as one of the ill omens which preceded the publication of the poem — that some of the literary friends to whom it was shown expressed doubts of its success, and that one among them had told him "it was too good for the age." Whoever may have pronounced this opinion, — and I have some suspicion that I am myself the guilty person, — the age has, it must be owned, most triumphantly refuted the calumny upon its taste which the remark implied.

It was in the hands of Mr. Rogers I first saw the sheets of the poem, and glanced hastily over a few of the stanzas which he pointed out to me as beautiful. Having occasion, the same morning, to write a note to Lord Byron, I expressed strongly the admiration which this foretaste of his work had excited in me; and the following is — as far as relates to literary matters — the answer I received from him.

TO MR. MOORE.

"January 29, 1812.

"MY DEAR MOORE: — I wish very much I could have seen you; I am in a state of ludicrous tribulation. . . .

"Why do you say that I dislike your poesy? I have expressed no such opinion, either in *print* or elsewhere. In scribbling myself, it was necessary for me to find fault, and I fixed upon the trite charge of immorality, because I could discover no other, and was so perfectly qualified, in the innocence of my heart, to 'pluck that mote from my neighbour's eye.'

"I feel very, very much obliged by your approbation; but, at *this moment*, praise, even *your* praise, passes by me like 'the idle wind.' I meant and mean to send you a copy the moment of publication; but now I can think of nothing but damned, deceitful, — delightful woman, as Mr. Liston says in the 'Knight of Snowdon.' Believe me, my dear Moore,

"Ever yours, most affectionately,

"BYRON."

The passages here omitted contain rather *too* amusing an account of a disturbance that had just occurred in the establishment at Newstead, in consequence of the detected misconduct of one of the maid servants, who had been supposed to stand

rather too high in the favour of her master, and, by the airs of authority which she thereupon assumed, had disposed all the rest of the household to regard her with no very charitable eyes. The chief actors in the strife were this sultana and young Rushton; and the first point in dispute that came to Lord Byron's knowledge (though circumstances, far from creditable to the damsel, afterward transpired) was, whether Rushton was bound to carry letters to "the Hut" at the bidding of this female. To an episode of such a nature I should not have thought of alluding, were it not for the two rather curious letters that follow, which show how gravely and coolly the young lord could arbitrate on such an occasion, and with what considerate leaning toward the servant whose fidelity he had proved, in preference to any new liking or fancy by which it might be suspected he was actuated toward the other.

TO ROBERT RUSHTON.

"8 St. James's Street, January 21, 1812.

"Though I have no objection to your refusal to carry *letters* to Mealey's, you will take care that the letters are taken by *Spero* at the proper time. I have also to observe, that Susan is to be treated with civility, and not *insulted* by any person over whom I have the smallest control, or, indeed, by any one whatever, while I have the power to protect her. I am truly sorry to have any subject of

complaint against *you;* I have too good an opinion of you to think I shall have occasion to repeat it, after the care I have taken of you, and my favourable intentions in your behalf. I see no occasion for any communication whatever between *you* and the *women*, and wish you to occupy yourself in preparing for the situation in which you will be placed. If a common sense of decency cannot prevent you from conducting yourself toward them with rudeness, I should at least hope that your *own interest*, and regard for a master who has *never* treated you with unkindness, will have some weight.

Yours, etc.

"BYRON.

"P. S. I wish you to attend to your arithmetic, to occupy yourself in surveying, measuring, and making yourself acquainted with every particular relative to the *land* of Newstead, and you will *write* to me *one letter every week*, that I may know how you go on."

TO ROBERT RUSHTON.

"8 ST. JAMES'S STREET, January 25, 1812.

"Your refusal to carry the letter was not a subject of remonstrance; it was not a part of your business; but the language you used to the girl was (as *she* stated it) highly improper.

"You say that you also have something to

complain of; then state it to me immediately; it would be very unfair, and very contrary to my disposition, not to hear both sides of the question.

"If anything has passed between you *before* or since my last visit to Newstead, do not be afraid to mention it. I am sure *you* would not deceive me, though *she* would. Whatever it is, *you* shall be forgiven. I have not been without some suspicions on the subject, and am certain that, at your time of life, the blame could not attach to you. You will not *consult* any one as to your answer, but write to me immediately. I shall be more ready to hear what you have to advance, as I do not remember ever to have heard a word from you before *against* any human being, which convinces me you would not maliciously assert an untruth. There is not any one who can do the least injury to you while you conduct yourself properly. I shall expect your answer immediately.

"Yours, etc.

"BYRON."

It was after writing these letters that he came to the knowledge of some improper levities on the part of the girl, in consequence of which he dismissed her and another female servant from Newstead; and how strongly he allowed this discovery to affect his mind, will be seen in a subsequent letter to Mr. Hodgson.

TO MR. HODGSON.

"8 St. James's Street, February 16, 1812.

"Dear Hodgson: — I send you a proof. Last week I was very ill and confined to bed with stone in the kidney, but I am now quite recovered. If the stone had got into my heart instead of my kidneys, it would have been all the better. The women are gone to their relatives, after many attempts to explain what was already too clear. However, I have quite recovered *that* also, and only wonder at my folly in excepting my own strumpets from the general corruption, — albeit a two months' weakness is better than ten years. I have one request to make, which is, never mention a woman again in any letter to me, or even allude to the existence of the sex. I won't even read a word of the feminine gender; — it must all be 'propria quæ maribus.'

"In the spring of 1813 I shall leave England for ever. Everything in my affairs tends to this, and my inclinations and health do not discourage it. Neither my habits nor constitution are improved by your customs or your climate. I shall find employment in making myself a good Oriental scholar. I shall retain a mansion in one of the fairest islands, and retrace, at intervals, the most interesting portions of the East. In the meantime, I am adjusting my concerns, which will (when arranged) leave me with wealth sufficient

even for home, but enough for a principality in Turkey. At present they are involved, but I hope, by taking some necessary but unpleasant steps, to clear everything. Hobhouse is expected daily in London; we shall be very glad to see him; and, perhaps, you will come up and 'drink deep ere he depart,' if not, 'Mahomet must go to the mountain;' but Cambridge will bring sad recollections to him, and worse to me, though for very different reasons. I believe the only human being that ever loved me in truth and entirely was of, or belonging to, Cambridge, and, in that, no change can now take place. There is one consolation in death,—where he sets his seal, the impression can neither be melted nor broken, but endureth for ever.

"Yours always, B."

Among those lesser memorials of his good nature and mindfulness, which, while they are precious to those who possess them, are not unworthy of admiration from others, may be reckoned such letters as the following, to a youth at Eton, recommending another, who was about to be entered at that school, to his care.

TO MASTER JOHN COWELL.

"8 St. James's Street, February 12, 1812.

"My dear John:—You have probably long ago forgotten the writer of these lines, who would, perhaps, be unable to recognise *yourself*, from the

difference which must naturally have taken place in your stature and appearance since he saw you last. I have been rambling through Portugal, Spain, Greece, etc., for some years, and have found so many changes on my return, that it would be very unfair not to expect that you should have had your share of alteration and improvement with the rest. I write to request a favour of you: a little boy of eleven years, the son of Mr. ———, my particular friend, is about to become an Etonian, and I should esteem any act of protection or kindness to him as an obligation to myself; let me beg of you then to take some little notice of him at first, till he is able to shift for himself.

"I was happy to hear a very favourable account of you from a schoolfellow a few weeks ago, and should be glad to learn that your family are as well as I wish them to be. I presume you are in the upper school; — as an *Etonian*, you will look down upon a *Harrow* man; but I never, even in my boyish days, disputed your superiority, which I once experienced in a cricket match, where I had the honour of making one of eleven, who were beaten to their hearts' content by your college in *one innings*.

"Believe me to be, with great truth," etc.

On the 27th of February, a day or two before the appearance of "Childe Harold," he made the first trial of his eloquence in the House of Lords; and

it was on this occasion he had the good fortune to become acquainted with Lord Holland, — an acquaintance no less honourable than gratifying to both, as having originated in feelings the most generous, perhaps, of our nature, a ready forgiveness of injuries, on the one side, and a frank and unqualified atonement for them, on the other. The subject of debate was the Nottingham Frame-breaking Bill, and, Lord Byron having mentioned to Mr. Rogers his intention to take a part in the discussion, a communication was, by the intervention of that gentleman, opened between the noble poet and Lord Holland, who, with his usual courtesy, professed himself ready to afford all the information and advice in his power. The following letters, however, will best explain their first advances toward acquaintance.

TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 4, 1812.

"My dear Sir: — With my best acknowledgments to Lord Holland, I have to offer my perfect concurrence in the propriety of the question previously to be put to ministers. If their answer is in the negative, I shall, with his lordship's approbation, give notice of a motion for a committee of inquiry. I would also gladly avail myself of his most able advice, and any information or documents with which he might be pleased to entrust

me, to bear me out in the statement of facts it may be necessary to submit to the House.

"From all that fell under my own observation during my Christmas visit to Newstead, I feel convinced that, if *conciliatory* measures are not very soon adopted, the most unhappy consequences may be apprehended. Nightly outrage and daily depredation are already at their height, and not only the masters of frames, who are obnoxious on account of their occupation, but persons in no degree connected with the malcontents or their oppressors are liable to insult and pillage.

"I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken on my account, and beg you to believe me ever your obliged and sincere," etc.

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"8 St. James's Street, February 25, 1812.

"My Lord: — With my best thanks, I have the honour to return the Notts. letter to your lordship. I have read it with attention, but do not think I shall venture to avail myself of its contents, as my view of the question differs in some measure from Mr. Coldham's. I hope I do not wrong him, but *his* objections to the bill appear to me to be founded on certain apprehensions that he and his coadjutors might be mistaken for the '*original advisers*' (to quote him) of the measure. For my own part, I consider the manufacturers as a much injured body

of men, sacrificed to the views of certain individuals who have enriched themselves by those practices which have deprived the frame-workers of employment. For instance, by the adoption of a certain kind of frame, one man performs the work of seven — six are thus thrown out of business. But it is to be observed that the work thus done is far inferior in quality, hardly marketable at home, and hurried over with a view to exportation. Surely, my lord, however we may rejoice in any improvement in the arts which may be beneficial to mankind, we must not allow mankind to be sacrificed to improvements in mechanism. The maintenance and well-doing of the industrious poor is an object of greater consequence to the community than the enrichment of a few monopolists by any improvement in the implements of trade, which deprives the workman of his bread, and renders the labourer 'unworthy of his hire.' My own motive for opposing the bill is founded on its palpable injustice, and its certain inefficacy. I have seen the state of these miserable men, and it is a disgrace to a civilised country. Their excesses may be condemned, but cannot be subject of wonder. The effect of the present bill would be to drive them into actual rebellion. The few words I shall venture to offer on Thursday will be founded upon these opinions formed from my own observations on the spot. By previous inquiry, I am convinced these men would have been restored to employment, and the

county to tranquillity. It is, perhaps, not yet too late, and is surely worth the trial. It can never be too late to employ force in such circumstances. I believe your lordship does not coincide with me entirely on this subject, and most cheerfully and sincerely shall I submit to your superior judgment and experience, and take some other line of argument against the bill, or be silent altogether, should you deem it more advisable. Condemning, as every one must condemn, the conduct of these wretches, I believe in the existence of grievances which call rather for pity than punishment. I have the honour to be, with great respect, my lord, your lordship's

"Most obedient and obliged servant,

"BYRON.

"P. S. I am a little apprehensive that your lordship will think me too lenient toward these men, and half a *frame-breaker myself*."

It would have been, no doubt, the ambition of Lord Byron to acquire distinction as well in oratory as in poesy; but Nature seems to set herself against pluralities in fame. He had prepared himself for this debate, — as most of the best orators have done, in their first essays, — not only by composing, but writing down, the whole of his speech beforehand. The reception he met with was flattering; some of the noble speakers on his own side com-

plimented him very warmly; and that he was himself highly pleased with his success, appears from the annexed account of Mr. Dallas, which gives a lively notion of his boyish elation on the occasion.

"When he left the great chamber, I went and met him in the passage; he was glowing with success, and much agitated. I had an umbrella in my right hand, not expecting that he would put out his hand to me; in my haste to take it when offered, I had advanced my left hand. 'What!' said he, 'give your friend your left hand upon such an occasion?' I showed the cause, and immediately changing the umbrella to the other hand, I gave him my right hand, which he shook and pressed warmly. He was greatly elated, and repeated some of the compliments which had been paid him, and mentioned one or two of the peers who had desired to be introduced to him. He concluded with saying that he had, by his speech, given me the best advertisement for 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.'"

The speech itself, as given by Mr. Dallas from the noble speaker's own manuscript, is pointed and vigorous; and the same sort of interest that is felt in reading the poetry of a Burke may be gratified, perhaps, by a few specimens of the oratory of a Byron. In the very opening of his speech, he thus introduces himself by the melancholy avowal that in that assembly of his brother nobles he stood almost a stranger.

"As a person in some degree connected with the suffering county, though a stranger not only to this House in general, but to almost every individual whose attention I presume to solicit, I must claim some portion of your lordships' indulgence."

The following extracts comprise, I think, the passages of most spirit:

"When we are told that these men are leagued together, not only for the destruction of their own comfort, but of their very means of subsistence, can we forget that it is the bitter policy, the destructive warfare, of the last eighteen years which has destroyed their comfort, your comfort, all men's comfort, — that policy which, originating with 'great statesmen now no more,' has survived the dead to become a curse on the living, unto the third and fourth generation! These men never destroyed their looms till they were become useless, — worse than useless; till they were become actual impediments to their exertions in obtaining their daily bread. Can you then wonder that, in times like these, when bankruptcy, convicted fraud, and imputed felony are found in a station not far beneath that of your lordships, the lowest, though once most useful, portion of the people should forget their duty in their distresses, and become only less guilty than one of their representatives? But while the exalted offender can find means to baffle the law, new

capital punishments must be devised, new snares of death must be spread for the wretched mechanic who is famished into guilt. These men were willing to dig, but the spade was in other hands; they were not ashamed to beg, but there was none to relieve them. Their own means of subsistence were cut off; all other employments preoccupied; and their excesses, however to be deplored or condemned, can hardly be the subject of surprise.

"I have traversed the seat of war in the Peninsula; I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey; but never, under the most despotic of infidel governments, did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return, in the very heart of a Christian country. And what are your remedies? After months of inaction, and months of action worse than inactivity, at length comes forth the grand specific, the never-failing nostrum of all state physicians from the days of Draco to the present time. After feeling the pulse, and shaking the head over the patient, prescribing the usual course of warm water and bleeding, — the warm water of your mawkish police, and the lancets of your military, — these convulsions must terminate in death, the sure consummation of the prescriptions of all political Sangrados. Setting aside the palpable injustice and the certain inefficiency of the bill, are there not capital punishments sufficient on your statutes? Is there not blood enough upon your penal code,

that more must be poured forth to ascend to heaven and testify against you? How will you carry this bill into effect? Can you commit a whole county to their own prisons? Will you erect a gibbet in every field, and hang up men like scarecrows? or will you proceed (as you must, to bring this measure into effect) by decimation; place the country under martial law; depopulate and lay waste all around you, and restore Sherwood Forest as an acceptable gift to the crown in its former condition of a royal chase, and an asylum for outlaws? Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace? Will the famished wretch who has braved your bayonets be appalled by your gibbets? When death is a relief, and the only relief it appears that you will afford him, will he be dragooned into tranquillity? Will that which could not be effected by your grenadiers, be accomplished by your executioners? If you proceed by the forms of law, where is your evidence? Those who refused to impeach their accomplices, when transportation only was the punishment, will hardly be tempted to witness against them when death is the penalty. With all due deference to the noble lords opposite, I think a little investigation, some previous inquiry, would induce even them to change their purpose. That most favourite state measure, so marvellously efficacious in many and recent instances, *temporising*, would not be without its advantage in this.

When a proposal is made to emancipate or relieve, you hesitate, you deliberate for years, you temporise and tamper with the minds of men; but a death-bill must be passed offhand, without a thought of the consequences."

In reference to his own parliamentary displays, and to this maiden speech in particular, I find the following remarks in one of his journals:

"Sheridan's liking for me (whether he was not mystifying me, I do not know, but Lady Caroline Lamb and others told me that he said the same both before and after he knew me) was founded upon 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' He told me that he did not care about poetry (or about mine — at least, any but *that* poem of mine), but he was sure, from *that* and other symptoms, I should make an orator, if I would but take to speaking, and grow a parliament man. He never ceased harping upon this to me to the last; and I remember my old tutor, Doctor Drury, had the same notion when I was a *boy;* but it never was my turn of inclination to try. I spoke once or twice, as all young peers do, as a kind of introduction into public life; but dissipation, shyness, haughty and reserved opinions, together with the short time I lived in England after my majority (only about five years in all), prevented me from resuming the experiment. As far as it went, it was not discouraging, particularly my *first* speech (I spoke three or four times in all); but just after

it my poem of 'Childe Harold' was published, and nobody ever thought about my *prose* afterward, nor indeed did I; it became to me a secondary and neglected object, though I sometimes wonder to myself if I should have succeeded."

His immediate impressions with respect to the success of his first speech may be collected from a letter addressed soon after to Mr. Hodgson.

TO MR. HODGSON.

"8 St. James's Street, March 5, 1812.

"My dear Hodgson: — *We* are not answerable for reports of speeches in the papers; they are always given incorrectly, and on this occasion more so than usual, from the debate in the Commons on the same night. The *Morning Post* should have said *eighteen years*. However, you will find the speech, as spoken, in the Parliamentary Register, when it comes out. Lords Holland and Grenville, particularly the latter, paid me some high compliments in the course of their speeches, as you may have seen in the papers, and Lords Eldon and Harrowby answered me. I have had many marvellous eulogies repeated to me since, in person and by proxy, from divers persons *ministerial* — yea, *ministerial!* — as well as oppositionists; of them I shall only mention Sir F. Burdett. *He* says it is the best speech by a *lord* since the '*Lord* knows when,' probably from a fellow feeling in the sentiments. Lord H. tells me I shall beat them all if I per-

severe; and Lord G. remarked that the construction of some of my periods are very like *Burke's!* And so much for vanity. I spoke very violent sentences with a sort of modest impudence, abused everything and everybody, and put the lord chancellor very much out of humour; and if I may believe what I hear, have not lost any character by the experiment. As to my delivery, loud and fluent enough, perhaps a little theatrical. I could not recognise myself or any one else in the newspapers.

"My poesy comes out on Saturday. Hobhouse is here; I shall tell him to write. My stone is gone for the present, but I fear is part of my habit. We *all* talk of a visit to Cambridge.

"Yours ever, B."

Of the same date as the above is the following letter to Lord Holland, accompanying a copy of his new publication, and written in a tone that cannot fail to give a high idea of his good feeling and candour.

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"St. James's Street, March 5, 1812.

"My Lord: — May I request your lordship to accept a copy of the thing which accompanies this note? You have already so fully proved the truth of the first line of Pope's couplet, —

"'Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,'—

that I long for the opportunity to give the lie to the verse that follows. If I were not perfectly convinced that anything I may have formerly uttered in the boyish rashness of my misplaced resentment had made as little impression as it deserved to make, I should hardly have the confidence — perhaps your lordship may give it a stronger and more appropriate appellation — to send you a quarto of the same scribbler. But your lordship, I am sorry to observe to-day, is troubled with the gout; if my book can produce a *laugh* against itself or the author, it will be of some service. If it can set you to *sleep*, the benefit will be yet greater; and as some facetious personage observed half a century ago, that 'poetry is a mere drug,' I offer you mine as a humble assistant to the 'eau médicinale.' I trust you will forgive this and all my other buffooneries, and believe me to be, with great respect,

"Your lordship's obliged and sincere servant,

"Byron."

It was within two days after his speech in the House of Lords that "Childe Harold" appeared;[13] and the impression which it produced upon the public was as instantaneous as it has proved deep and lasting. The permanence of such success genius alone could secure, but to its instant and enthusiastic burst, other causes besides the merit of the work concurred.

There are those who trace in the peculiar character of Lord Byron's genius strong features of relationship to the times in which he lived; who think that the great events which marked the close of the last century, by giving a new impulse to men's minds, by habituating them to the daring and the free, and allowing full vent to "the flash and outbreak of fiery spirits," had led naturally to the production of such a poet as Byron; and that he was, in short, as much the child and representative of the Revolution, in poesy, as another great man of the age, Napoleon, was in statesmanship and warfare. Without going the full length of this notion, it will, at least, be conceded, that the free loose which had been given to all the passions and energies of the human mind, in the great struggle of that period, together with the constant spectacle of such astounding vicissitudes as were passing, almost daily, on the theatre of the world, had created, in all minds, and in every walk of intellect, a taste for strong excitement, which the stimulants supplied from ordinary sources were insufficient to gratify; that a tame deference to established authorities had fallen into disrepute, no less in literature than in politics, and that the poet who should breathe into his songs the fierce and passionate spirit of the age, and assert, untrammelled and unawed, the high dominion of genius, would be the most sure of an audience toned in sympathy with his strains.

It is true that, to the license on religious subjects, which revelled through the first acts of that tremendous drama, a disposition of an opposite tendency had, for some time, succeeded. Against the wit of the scoffer, not only piety, but a better taste, revolted; and had Lord Byron, in touching on such themes in "Childe Harold," adopted a tone of levity or derision (such as, unluckily, he sometimes afterward descended to), not all the originality and beauty of his work would have secured for it a prompt or uncontested triumph. As it was, however, the few dashes of skepticism with which he darkened his strain, far from checking his popularity, were among those attractions which, as I have said, independent of all the charms of the poetry, accelerated and heightened its success. The religious feeling that has sprung up through Europe since the French Revolution, — like the political principles that have emerged out of the same event, — in rejecting all the licentiousness of that period, has preserved much of its spirit of freedom and inquiry; and, among the best fruits of this enlarged and enlightened piety is the liberty which it disposes men to accord to the opinions, and even heresies, of others. To persons thus sincerely and, at the same time, tolerantly devout, the spectacle of a great mind, like that of Byron, labouring in the eclipse of skepticism, could not be otherwise than an object of deep and solemn interest. If they had already known what it was

to doubt, themselves, they would enter into his fate with mournful sympathy; while, if safe in the tranquil haven of faith, they would look with pity on one who was still a wanderer. Besides, erring and dark as might be his views at that moment, there were circumstances in his character and fate that gave a hope of better thoughts yet dawning upon him. From his temperament and youth, there could be little fear that he was yet hardened in his heresies, and as, for a heart wounded like his, there was, they knew, but one true source of consolation, so it was hoped that the love of truth, so apparent in all he wrote, would, one day, enable him to find it.

Another, and not the least of those causes which concurred with the intrinsic claims of his genius to give an impulse to the tide of success that now flowed upon him, was, unquestionably, the peculiarity of his personal history and character. There had been, in his very first introduction of himself to the public, a sufficient portion of singularity to excite strong attention and interest. While all other youths of talent, in his high station, are heralded into life by the applauses and anticipations of a host of friends, young Byron stood forth alone, unannounced by either praise or promise, — the representative of an ancient house, whose name, long lost in the gloomy solitudes of Newstead, seemed to have just awakened from the sleep of half a century in his person. The circum-

stances that, in succession, followed, — the prompt vigour of his reprisals upon the assailants of his fame, — his disappearance, after this achievement, from the scene of his triumph, without deigning even to wait for the laurels which he had earned, and his departure on a far pilgrimage, whose limits he left to chance and fancy, — all these successive incidents had thrown an air of adventure around the character of the young poet, which prepared his readers to meet half-way the impressions of his genius. Instead of finding him, on a nearer view, fall short of their imaginations, the new features of his disposition now disclosed to them far outwent, in peculiarity and interest, whatever they might have preconceived; while the curiosity and sympathy, awakened by what he suffered to transpire of his history, were still more heightened by the mystery of his allusions to much that yet remained untold. The late losses by death which he had sustained, and which, it was manifest, he most deeply mourned, gave a reality to the notion formed of him by his admirers which seemed to authorise them in imagining still more; and what has been said of the poet Young, that he found out the art of "making the public a party to his private sorrows," may be, with infinitely more force and truth, applied to Lord Byron.

On that circle of society with whom he came immediately in contact, these personal influences acted with increased force, from being assisted by

others, which, to female imaginations especially, would have presented a sufficiency of attraction, even without the great qualities joined with them. His youth; the noble beauty of his countenance, and its constant play of lights and shadows; the gentleness of his voice and manner to women, and his occasional haughtiness to men; the alleged singularities of his mode of life, which kept curiosity alive and inquisitive, — all these lesser traits and habitudes concurred toward the quick spread of his fame; nor can it be denied that, among many purer sources of interest in his poem, the allusions which he makes to instances of "*successful* passion" in his career[14] were not without their influence on the fancies of that sex, whose weakness it is to be most easily won by those who come recommended by the greatest number of triumphs over others.

That his rank was also to be numbered among these extrinsic advantages appears to have been — partly, perhaps, from a feeling of modesty at the time — his own persuasion. "I may place a great deal of it," said he to Mr. Dallas, "to my being a lord." It might be supposed that it is only on a rank inferior to his own such a charm could operate; but this very speech is, in itself, a proof, that in no class whatever is the advantage of being noble more felt and appreciated than among nobles themselves. It was, also, natural that, in that circle, the admiration of the new poet should be,

at least, quickened by the consideration that he had sprung up among themselves, and that their order had, at length, produced a man of genius, by whom the arrears of contribution, long due from them to the treasury of English literature, would be at once fully and splendidly discharged.

Altogether, taking into consideration the various points I have here enumerated, it may be asserted that never did there exist before, and it is most probable never will exist again, a combination of such vast mental power and surpassing genius with so many other of those advantages and attractions by which the world is, in general, dazzled and captivated. The effect was, accordingly, electric; his fame had not to wait for any of the ordinary gradations, but seemed to spring up, like the palace of a fairy tale, in a night. As he himself briefly described it in his memoranda, "I awoke one morning and found myself famous." The first edition of his work was disposed of instantly; and, as the echoes of its reputation multiplied on all sides, "Childe Harold" and "Lord Byron" became the theme of every tongue. At his door, most of the leading names of the day presented themselves, — some of them persons whom he had much wronged in his Satire, but who now forgot their resentment in generous admiration. From morning till night the most flattering testimonies of his success crowded his table, — from the grave tributes of the statesman and the philosopher down

to (what flattered him still more) the romantic billet of some *incognita*, or the pressing note of invitation from some fair leader of fashion; and, in place of the desert which London had been to him but a few weeks before, he now not only saw the whole splendid interior of high life thrown open to receive him, but found himself, among its illustrious crowds, the most distinguished object.

The copyright of the poem, which was purchased by Mr. Murray for £600, he presented, in the most delicate and unostentatious manner, to Mr. Dallas,[15] saying, at the same time, that he "never would receive money for his writings;" a resolution, the mixed result of generosity and pride, which he afterward wisely abandoned, though borne out by the example of Swift[16] and Voltaire, the latter of whom gave away most of his copyrights to Prault and other booksellers, and received books, not money, for those he disposed of otherwise. To his young friend, Mr. Harness, it had been his intention, at first, to dedicate the work, but, on further consideration, he relinquished his design; and in a letter to that gentleman (which, with some others, is unfortunately lost) alleged, as his reason for this change, the prejudice which, he foresaw, some parts of the poem would raise against himself, and his fear lest, by any possibility, a share of the odium might so far extend itself to his friend as to injure him in the profession to which he was about to devote himself.

Not long after the publication of "Childe Harold," the noble author paid me a visit one morning, and, putting a letter into my hands, which he had just received, requested that I would undertake to manage for him whatever proceedings it might render necessary. This letter, I found, had been delivered to him by Mr. Leckie (a gentleman well known by a work on Sicilian affairs), and came from a once active and popular member of the fashionable world, Colonel Greville, — its purport being to require of his lordship, as author of "English Bards," etc., such reparation as it was in his power to make for the injury which, as Colonel Greville conceived, certain passages in that satire, reflecting upon his conduct as manager of the Argyle Institution, were calculated to inflict upon his character. In the appeal of the gallant Colonel, there were some expressions of rather an angry cast, which Lord Byron, though fully conscious of the length to which he himself had gone, was but little inclined to brook, and, on my returning the letter into his hands, he said, "To such a letter as that there can be but one sort of answer." He agreed, however, to trust the matter entirely to my discretion, and I had, shortly after, an interview with the friend of Colonel Greville. By this gentleman, who was then an utter stranger to me, I was received with much courtesy, and with every disposition to bring the affair entrusted to us to an amicable issue. On my premising that the

tone of his friend's letter stood in the way of negotiation, and that some obnoxious expressions which it contained must be removed before I could proceed a single step toward explanation, he most readily consented to remove this obstacle. At his request I drew a pen across the parts I considered objectionable, and he undertook to send me the letter rewritten, next morning. In the meantime I received from Lord Byron the following paper for my guidance:

"With regard to the passage on Mr. Way's loss, no unfair play was hinted at, as may be seen by referring to the book; and it is expressly added that the *managers were ignorant* of that transaction. As to the prevalence of play at the Argyle, it cannot be denied that there were *billiards* and *dice;* Lord B. has been a witness to the use of both at the Argyle Rooms. These, it is presumed, come under the denomination of play. If play be allowed, the president of the Institution can hardly complain of being termed the 'Arbiter of Play,' — or what becomes of his authority?

"Lord B. has no personal animosity to Colonel Greville. A public institution, to which he himself was a subscriber, he considered himself to have a right to notice *publicly*. Of that institution Colonel Greville was avowed the director; it is too late to enter into the discussion of its merits or demerits.

"Lord B. must leave the discussion of the reparation, for the real or supposed injury, to Colonel G.'s friend, and Mr. Moore, the friend of Lord B. — begging them to recollect that, while they consider Colonel's G.'s honour, Lord B. must also maintain his own. If the business can be settled amicably, Lord B. will do as much as can and ought to be done by a man of honour toward conciliation; if not, he must satisfy Colonel G. in the manner most conducive to his further wishes."

In the morning I received the letter in its new form, from Mr. Leckie, with the annexed note.

"My dear Sir: — I found my friend very ill in bed; he has, however, managed to copy the enclosed, with the alterations proposed. Perhaps you may wish to see me in the morning; I shall therefore be glad to see you any time till twelve o'clock. If you rather wish me to call on you, tell me, and I shall obey your summons. Yours, very truly,

"G. T. Leckie."

With such facilities toward pacification, it is almost needless to add that there was but little delay in settling the matter amicably.

While upon this subject, I shall avail myself of the opportunity which it affords of extracting an

amusing account given by Lord Byron himself of some affairs of this description, in which he was, at different times, employed as mediator.

"I have been called in as mediator, or second, at least twenty times, in violent quarrels, and have always contrived to settle the business without compromising the honour of the parties, or leading them to mortal consequences, and this, too, sometimes in very difficult and delicate circumstances, and having to deal with very hot and haughty spirits, — Irishmen, gamesters, guardsmen, captains, and cornets of horse, and the like. This was, of course, in my youth, when I lived in hot-headed company. I have had to carry challenges from gentlemen to noblemen, from captains to captains, from lawyers to counsellors, and once from a clergyman to an officer in the Life Guards; but I found the latter by far the most difficult, —

"'to compose
The bloody duel without blows,' —

the business being about a woman: I must add, too, that I never saw a *woman* behave so ill, like a cold-blooded, heartless b—— as she was, — but very handsome for all that. A certain Susan C—— was she called. I never saw her but once; and that was to induce her but to say two words (which in no degree compromised herself), and which would have had the effect of saving a priest or a lieutenant of cavalry. She would *not* say

them, and neither N—— nor myself (the son of Sir E. N——, and a friend to one of the parties) could prevail upon her to say them, though both of us used to deal in some sort with womankind. At last I managed to quiet the combatants without her talisman, and, I believe, to her great disappointment: she was the damnedest b—— that I ever saw, and I have seen a great many. Though my clergyman was sure to lose either his life or his living, he was as warlike as the Bishop of Beauvais, and would hardly be pacified; but then he was in love, and that is a martial passion."

However disagreeable it was to find the consequences of his Satire thus rising up against him in a hostile shape, he was far more embarrassed in those cases where the retribution took a friendly form. Being now daily in the habit of meeting and receiving kindnesses from persons who, either in themselves, or through their relatives, had been wounded by his pen, he felt every fresh instance of courtesy from such quarters to be (as he sometimes, in the strong language of Scripture, expressed it) like "heaping coals of fire upon his head." He was, indeed, in a remarkable degree, sensitive to the kindness or displeasure of those he lived with; and had he passed a life subject to the immediate influence of society, it may be doubted whether he ever would have ventured upon those unbridled bursts of energy in which he at once demonstrated and abused his power. At the period

when he ran riot in his Satire, society had not yet caught him within it pale; and in the time of his Cains and Don Juans, he had again broken loose from it. Hence, his instinct toward a life of solitude and independence, as the true element of his strength. In his own domain of imagination he could defy the whole world; while, in real life, a frown or smile could rule him. The facility with which he sacrificed his first volume, at the mere suggestion of his friend, Mr. Becher, is a strong proof of this pliableness; and in the instance of "Childe Harold," such influence had the opinions of Mr. Gifford and Mr. Dallas on his mind, that he not only shrunk from his original design of identifying himself with his hero, but surrendered to them one of his most favourite stanzas, whose heterodoxy they had objected to; nor is it too much, perhaps, to conclude, that had a more extended force of such influence then acted upon him, he would have consented to omit the skeptical parts of his poem altogether. Certain it is that, during the remainder of his stay in England, no such doctrines were ever again obtruded on his readers; and in all those beautiful creations of his fancy, with which he brightened that whole period, keeping the public eye in one prolonged gaze of admiration, both the bitterness and the license of his impetuous spirit were kept effectually under control. The world, indeed, had yet to witness what he was capable of, when emanci-

pated from this restraint. For, graceful and powerful as were his flights while society had still a hold of him, it was not till let loose from the leash that he rose into the true region of his strength; and though almost in proportion to that strength was, too frequently, his abuse of it, yet so magnificent are the very excesses of such energy, that it is impossible, even while we condemn, not to admire.

The occasion by which I had been led into these remarks — namely, his sensitiveness on the subject of his Satire — is one of those instances that show how easily his gigantic spirit could be, if not held down, at least entangled, by the small ties of society. The aggression of which he had been guilty was not only past, but, by many of those most injured, forgiven; and yet, — highly, it must be allowed, to the credit of his social feelings, — the idea of living familiarly and friendlily with persons, respecting whose character or talents there were such opinions of his on record, became, at length, insupportable to him; and, though far advanced in a fifth edition of "English Bards," etc., he came to the resolution of suppressing the Satire altogether; and orders were sent to Cawthorn, the publisher, to commit the whole impression to the flames. At the same time, and from similar motives, — aided, I rather think, by a friendly remonstrance from Lord Elgin, or some of his connections, — the "Curse of Minerva," a poem levelled against

that nobleman, and already in progress toward publication, was also sacrificed; while the "Hints from Horace," though containing far less personal satire than either of the others, shared their fate.

To exemplify what I have said of his extreme sensibility, to the passing sunshine or clouds of the society in which he lived, I need but cite the following notes, addressed by him to his friend Mr. William Bankes, under the apprehension that this gentleman was, for some reason or other, displeased with him.

TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"April 20, 1812.

"My dear Bankes: — I feel rather hurt (not savagely) at the speech you made to me last night, and my hope is, that it was only one of your *profane* jests. I should be very sorry that any part of my behaviour should give you cause to suppose that I think higher of myself, or otherwise of you than I have always done. I can assure you that I am as much the humblest of your servants as at Trin. Coll.; and if I have not been at home when you favoured me with a call, the loss was more mine than yours. In the bustle of buzzing parties, there is, there can be, no rational conversation; but when I can enjoy it, there is nobody's I can prefer to your own. Believe me, ever faithfully and most affectionately yours,

"Byron."

TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"My dear Bankes: — My eagerness to come to an explanation has, I trust, convinced you that whatever my unlucky manner might inadvertently be, the change was as unintentional as (if intended) it would have been ungrateful. I really was not aware that, while we were together, I had evinced such caprices; that we were not so much in each other's company as I could have wished, I well know, but I think so *acute* an *observer* as yourself must have perceived enough to *explain this*, without supposing any slight to one in whose society I have pride and pleasure. Recollect that I do not allude here to 'extended' or 'extending' acquaintances, but to circumstances you will understand, I think, on a little reflection.

"And now, my dear Bankes, do not distress me by supposing that I can think of you, or you of me, otherwise than I trust we have long thought. You told me not long ago that my temper was improved, and I should be sorry that opinion should be revoked. Believe me, your friendship is of more account to me than all those absurd vanities in which, I fear, you conceive me to take too much interest. I have never disputed your superiority, or doubted (seriously) your good will, and no one shall ever 'make mischief between us' without the sincere regret on the part of your ever affectionate, etc.

"P. S. I shall see you, I hope, at Lady Jersey's. Hobhouse goes also."

In the month of April he was again tempted to try his success in the House of Lords; and, on the motion of Lord Donoughmore for taking into consideration the claims of the Irish Catholics, delivered his sentiments strongly in favour of the proposition. His display, on this occasion, seems to have been less promising than in his first essay. His delivery was thought mouthing and theatrical, being infected, I take for granted (having never heard him speak in Parliament), with the same chanting tone that disfigured his recitation of poetry, — a tone contracted at most of the public schools, but more particularly, perhaps, at Harrow, and encroaching just enough on the boundaries of song to offend those ears most by which song is best enjoyed and understood.

On the subject of the negotiations for a change of ministry which took place during this session, I find the following anecdotes recorded in his note-book:

"At the opposition meeting of the peers in 1812, at Lord Grenville's, when Lord Grey and he read to us the correspondence upon Moira's negotiation, I sate next to the present Duke of Grafton, and said, 'What is to be done next?' 'Wake the Duke of Norfolk' (who was snoring away near us), replied he: 'I don't think the

negotiators have left anything else for us to do this turn.'

"In the debate, or rather discussion, afterward, in the House of Lords upon that very question, I sate immediately behind Lord Moira, who was extremely annoyed at Grey's speech upon the subject; and, while Grey was speaking, turned around to me repeatedly, and asked me whether I agreed with him. It was an awkward question to me, who had not heard both sides. Moira kept repeating to me, 'It was *not so*, it was so and so,' etc. I did not know very well what to think, but I sympathised with the acuteness of his feelings upon the subject."

The subject of the Catholic claims was, it is well known, brought forward a second time this session by Lord Wellesley, whose motion for a future consideration of the question was carried by a majority of one. In reference to this division, another rather amusing anecdote is thus related.

"Lord ——— affects an imitation of two very different chancellors, Thurlow and Loughborough, and can indulge in an oath now and then. On one of the debates on the Catholic question, when we were either equal or within one (I forget which), I had been sent for in great haste to a ball, which I quitted, I confess, somewhat reluctantly, to emancipate five millions of people. I came in late, and did not go immediately into the body of the House, but stood just behind the woolsack. ——— turned around, and, catching

my eye, immediately said to a peer (who had come to him for a few minutes on the woolsack, as is the custom of his friends), 'Damn them! they'll have it now, — by G—d! the vote that is just come in will give it them.'"

During all this time, the impression which he had produced in society, both as a poet and a man, went on daily increasing; and the facility with which he gave himself up to the current of fashionable life, and mingled in all the gay scenes through which it led, showed that the novelty, at least, of this mode of existence had charms for him, however he might estimate its pleasures. That sort of vanity which is almost inseparable from genius, and which consists in an extreme sensitiveness on the subject of self, Lord Byron, I need not say, possessed in no ordinary degree; and never was there a career in which this sensibility to the opinions of others was exposed to more constant and various excitement than that on which he was now entered. I find in a note of my own to him, written at this period, some jesting allusions to the "circle of star-gazers" whom I had left around him at some party on the preceding night; and such, in fact, was the flattering ordeal he had to undergo wherever he went. On these occasions, — particularly before the range of his acquaintance had become sufficiently extended to set him wholly at his ease, — his air and port were those of one whose better thoughts were elsewhere, and who

looked with melancholy abstraction on the gay crowd around him. This deportment, so rare in such scenes, and so accordant with the romantic notions entertained of him, was the result partly of shyness, and partly, perhaps, of that love of effect and impression to which the poetical character of his mind naturally led. Nothing, indeed, could be more amusing and delightful than the contrast which his manners afterward, when we were alone, presented to his proud reserve in the brilliant circle we had just left. It was like the bursting gaiety of a boy let loose from school, and seemed as if there was no extent of fun or tricks of which he was not capable. Finding him invariably thus lively when we were together, I often rallied him on the gloomy tone of his poetry, as assumed; but his constant answer was (and I soon ceased to doubt of its truth), that, though thus merry and full of laughter with those he liked, he was, at heart, one of the most melancholy wretches in existence.

Among the numerous notes which I received from him at this time, — some of them relating to our joint engagements in society, and others to matters now better forgotten, — I shall select a few that (as showing his haunts and habits) may not, perhaps, be uninteresting.

"March 25, 1812.

"Know all men by these presents, that you, Thomas Moore, stand indicted — no — invited, by

special and particular solicitation, to Lady C. L——'s to-morrow evening, at half-past nine o'clock, where you will meet with a civil reception and decent entertainment. Pray, come — I was so examined after you this morning, that I entreat you to answer in person.

"Believe me," etc.

"Friday noon.

"I should have answered your note yesterday, but I hoped to have seen you this morning. I must consult with you about the day we dine with Sir Francis. I suppose we shall meet at Lady Spencer's to-night. I did not know that you were at Miss Berry's the other night, or I should have certainly gone there.

"As usual, I am in all sorts of scrapes, though none, at present, of a martial description.

"Believe me," etc.

"May 8, 1812.

"I am too proud of being your friend to care with whom I am linked in your estimation, and, God knows, I want friends more at this time than at any other. I am 'taking care of myself' to no great purpose. If you knew my situation in every point of view you would excuse apparent and unintentional neglect. I shall leave town, I think; but do not you leave it without seeing me. I wish you, from my soul, every happiness you can wish

yourself; and I think you have taken the road to secure it. Peace be with you! I fear she has abandoned me.

"Ever," etc.

"May 20, 1812.

"On Monday, after sitting up all night, I saw Bellingham launched into eternity,[17] and at three the same day I saw ——— launched into the country.

"I believe, in the beginning of June, I shall be down for a few days in Notts. If so, I shall beat you up 'en passant' with Hobhouse, who is endeavouring, like you and everybody else, to keep me out of scrapes.

"I meant to have written you a long letter, but I find I cannot. If anything remarkable occurs, you will hear it from me — if good; if *bad*, there are plenty to tell it. In the meantime, do you be happy. Ever yours, etc.

"P. S. My best wishes and respects to Mrs. ———; she is beautiful. I may say so even to you, for I never was more struck with a countenance."

Among the tributes to his fame, this spring, it should have been mentioned that, at some evening party, he had the honour of being presented, at that royal personage's own desire, to the prince

regent. "The regent," says Mr. Dallas, "expressed his admiration of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' and continued a conversation, which so fascinated the poet, that had it not been for an accidental deferring of the next levee, he bade fair to become a visitor at Carlton House, if not a complete courtier."

After this wise prognostic, the writer adds: "I called on him on the morning for which the levee had been appointed, and found him in a full dress court suit of clothes, with his fine black hair in powder, which by no means suited his countenance. I was surprised, as he had not told me that he should go to court; and it seemed to me as if he thought it necessary to apologise for his intention, by his observing that he could not in decency but do it, as the regent had done him the honour to say that he hoped to see him soon at Carlton House."

In the two letters that follow we find his own account of the introduction.

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"June 25, 1812.

"My dear Lord: — I must appear very ungrateful, and have, indeed, been very negligent, but till last night I was not apprised of Lady Holland's restoration, and I shall call to-morrow to have the satisfaction, I trust, of hearing that she is well. — I hope that neither politics nor

gout have assailed your lordship since I last saw you, and that you also are 'as well as could be expected.'

"The other night at a ball, I was presented by order to our gracious regent, who honoured me with some conversation, and professed a predilection for poetry. I confess it was a most unexpected honour, and I thought of poor B——s's adventure, with some apprehension of a similar blunder. I have now great hope, in the event of Mr. Pye's decease, of 'warbling truth at court,' like Mr. Mallet of indifferent memory. Consider, one hundred marks a year! besides the wine and the disgrace; but then remorse would make me drown myself in my own butt before the year's end, or the finishing of my first dithyrambic. So that, after all, I shall not meditate our laureate's death by pen or poison.

"Will you present my best respects to Lady Holland? and believe me hers and yours very sincerely."

The second letter, entering much more fully into the particulars of this interview with royalty, was in answer, it will be perceived, to some inquiries which Sir Walter Scott (then Mr. Scott) had addressed to him on the subject; and the whole account reflects even still more honour on the sovereign himself than on the two poets.

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

"St. James's Street, July 6, 1812.

"Sir:—I have just been honoured with your letter. I feel sorry that you should have thought it worth while to notice the 'evil works of my nonage,' as the thing is suppressed *voluntarily*, and your explanation is too kind not to give me pain. The Satire was written when I was very young and very angry, and fully bent on displaying my wrath and my wit, and now I am haunted by the ghosts of my wholesale assertions. I cannot sufficiently thank you for your praise; and now, waiving myself, let me talk to you of the prince regent. He ordered me to be presented to him at a ball; and after some sayings peculiarly pleasing from royal lips, as to my own attempts, he talked to me of you and your immortalities: he preferred you to every bard past and present, and asked which of your works pleased me most. It was a difficult question. I answered, I thought the 'Lay.' He said his own opinion was nearly similar. In speaking of the others, I told him that I thought you more particularly the poet of *princes*, as *they* never appeared more fascinating than in 'Marmion' and the 'Lady of the Lake.' He was pleased to coincide, and to dwell on the description of your Jameses as no less royal than poetical. He spoke alternately of Homer and yourself, and seemed well acquainted with both; so that

(with the exception of the Turks and your humble servant) you were in very good company. I defy Murray to have exaggerated his Royal Highness's opinion of your powers, nor can I pretend to enumerate all he said on the subject; but it may give you pleasure to hear that it was conveyed in language which would only suffer by my attempting to transcribe it, and with a tone and taste which gave me a very high idea of his abilities and accomplishments, which I had hitherto considered as confined to *manners*, certainly superior to those of any living *gentleman*.

"This interview was accidental. I never went to the levee; for having seen the courts of Mussulman and Catholic sovereigns, my curiosity was sufficiently allayed; and my politics being as perverse as my rhymes, I had, in fact, 'no business there. To be thus praised by your sovereign must be gratifying to you; and if that gratification is not alloyed by the communication being made through me, the bearer of it will consider himself very fortunately and sincerely,

"Your obliged and obedient servant,

"BYRON.

"P. S. Excuse this scrawl, scratched in a great hurry, and just after a journey."

During the summer of this year, he paid visits to some of his noble friends, and, among others,

to the Earl of Jersey and the Marquis of Lansdowne. "In 1812," he says, "at Middleton (Lord Jersey's), amongst a goodly company of lords, ladies, and wits, etc., there was . . .[18]

"Erskine, too! Erskine was there; good, but intolerable. He jested, he talked, he did everything admirably, but then he *would* be applauded for the same thing twice over. He would read his own verses, his own paragraph, and tell his own story again and again; and then the 'Trial by Jury!' I almost wished it abolished, for I sat next him at dinner. As I had read his published speeches, there was no occasion to repeat them to me.

"C—— (the fox-hunter), nicknamed '*Cheek* C——,' and I sweated the claret, being the only two who did so. C——, who loves his bottle, and had no notion of meeting with a 'bon-vivant' in a scribbler,[19] in making my eulogy to somebody one evening, summed it up in 'By G—d, he drinks like a man.'

"Nobody drank, however, but C—— and I. To be sure, there was little occasion, for we swept off what was on the table (a most splendid board, as may be supposed, at Jersey's) very sufficiently. However, we carried our liquor discreetly, like the Baron of Bradwardine."

In the month of August this year, on the completion of the new Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, the committee of management, desirous of procur-

ing an address for the opening of the theatre, took the rather novel mode of inviting, by an advertisement in the newspapers, the competition of all the poets of the day toward this object. Though the contributions that ensued were sufficiently numerous, it did not appear to the committee that there was any one among the number worthy of selection. In this difficulty it occurred to Lord Holland that they could not do better than have recourse to Lord Byron, whose popularity would give additional vogue to the solemnity of their opening, and to whose transcendent claims, as a poet, it was taken for granted (though without sufficient allowance, as it proved, for the irritability of the brotherhood) even the rejected candidates themselves would bow without a murmur. The first result of this application to the noble poet will be learned from what follows.

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"CHELTENHAM, September 10, 1812.

"MY DEAR LORD: — The lines which I sketched off on your hint are still, or rather *were*, in an unfinished state, for I have just committed them to a flame more decisive than that of Drury. Under all the circumstances, I should hardly wish a contest with Philo-drama — Philo-Drury — Asbestos, H——, and all the anonymes and synonymes of committee candidates. Seriously, I think you have a chance of something much bet-

ter; for prologuising is not my forte, and, at all events, either my pride or my modesty won't let me incur the hazard of having my rhymes buried in next month's magazine, under 'Essays on the Murder of Mr. Perceval,' and 'Cures for the Bite of a Mad Dog,' as poor Goldsmith complained of the fate of far superior performances.

"I am still sufficiently interested to wish to know the successful candidate; and, amongst so many, I have no doubt some will be excellent, particularly in an age when writing verse is the easiest of all attainments.

"I cannot answer your intelligence with the 'like comfort,' unless, as you are deeply theatrical, you may wish to hear of Mr. ———, whose acting is, I fear, utterly inadequate to the London engagement into which the managers of Covent Garden have lately entered. His figure is fat, his features flat, his voice unmanageable, his action ungraceful, and, as Diggory says, 'I defy him to *ex*tort that d——d muffin face of his into madness.' I was very sorry to see him in the character of the 'Elephant on the slack rope;' for when I last saw him, I was in raptures with his performance. But then I was sixteen,—an age to which all London condescended to subside. After all, much better judges have admired, and may again; but I venture to 'prognosticate a prophecy' (see the *Courier*) that he will not succeed.

"So, poor dear Rogers has stuck fast on 'the

brow of the mighty Helvellyn' — I hope not for ever. My best respects to Lady H. Her departure, with that of my other friends, was a sad event for me, now reduced to a state of the most cynical solitude. 'By the waters of Cheltenham I sat down and *drank*, when I remembered thee, oh Georgiana Cottage! As for our *harps*, we hanged them up upon the willows that grew thereby. Then they said sing us a song of Drury Lane,' etc., — but I am dumb and dreary as the Israelites. The waters have disordered me to my heart's content — you *were* right, as you always are. Believe me ever your obliged and affectionate servant,

"Byron."

The request of the committee for his aid having been still more urgently repeated, he, at length, notwithstanding the difficulty and invidiousness of the task, from his strong wish to oblige Lord Holland, consented to undertake it; and the quick succeeding notes and letters, which he addressed, during the completion of the address to his noble friend, afford a proof (in conjunction with others of still more interest, yet to be cited) of the pains he, at this time, took in improving and polishing his first conceptions, and the importance he wisely attached to a judicious choice of epithets as a means of enriching both the music and the meaning of his verse. They also show — what, as an illustration of his character, is even still more valuable — the

exceeding pliancy and good humour with which he could yield to friendly suggestions and criticisms; nor can it be questioned, I think, but that the docility thus invariably exhibited by him, on points where most poets are found to be tenacious and irritable, was a quality natural to his disposition, and such as might have been turned to account in far more important matters, had he been fortunate enough to meet with persons capable of understanding and guiding him.

The following are a few of those hasty notes, on the subject of the address, which I allude to:

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 22, 1812.

"My dear Lord: — In a day or two I will send you something which you will still have the liberty to reject if you dislike it. I should like to have had more time, but will do my best, — but too happy if I can oblige *you*, though I may offend a hundred scribblers and the discerning public.

"Ever yours.

"Keep *my name* a *secret;* or I shall be beset by all the rejected, and, perhaps, damned by a party."

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"Cheltenham, September 23, 1812.

"Ecco! — I have marked some passages with *double* readings; choose between them, — *cut* — *add* — *reject* — or *destroy* — do with them as you

will — I leave it to you and the committee — you cannot say so called 'a *non committendo*.' What will *they* do (and I do) with the hundred and one rejected troubadours? 'With trumpets, yea, and with shawms,' will you be assailed in the most diabolical doggerel. I wish my name not to transpire till the day is decided. I shall not be in town, so it won't much matter; but let us have a good *deliverer*. I think Elliston should be the man, or Pope; *not* Raymond, I implore you, by the love of Rhythmus!

"The passages marked thus = =, above and below, are for you to choose between epithets, and such like poetical furniture. Pray write me a line, and believe me ever, etc.

"My best remembrances to Lady H. Will you be good enough to deeide between the various readings marked, and erase the other; or our *deliverer* may be as puzzled as a commentator, and belike repeat both. If these *versicles* won't do, I will hammer out some more endecasyllables.

"P. S. Tell Lady H. I have had sad work to keep out the Phœnix — I mean the Fire Office of that name. It has insured the theatre, and why not the Address?"

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 24.

"I send a recast of the four first lines of the concluding paragraph.

" This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obeyed,
The drama's homage by her Herald paid,
Receive *our welcome too*, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises, etc.

And do forgive all this trouble. See what it is to have to do even with the *genteelest* of us.

" Ever," etc.

TO LORD HOLLAND.

" September 26, 1812.

" You will think there is no end to my villainous emendations. The fifth and sixth lines I think to alter thus:

" Ye who beheld — oh sight admired and mourned,
Whose radiance mocked the ruin it adorned;

because 'night' is repeated the next line but one; and, as it now stands, the conclusion of the paragraph, 'worthy him (Shakespeare) and *you*,' appears to apply the '*you*' to those only who were out of bed and in Covent Garden Market on the night of conflagration, instead of the audience or the discerning public at large, all of whom are intended to be comprised in that comprehensive and, I hope, comprehensible pronoun.

" By the by, one of my corrections in the fair copy sent yesterday has dived into the bathos some sixty fathoms, —

" When Garrick died, and Brinsley ceased to write.

Ceasing to *live* is a much more serious concern, and ought not to be first; therefore I will let the old couplet stand, with its half rhymes 'sought' and 'wrote.'[20] Second thoughts in everything are best, but, in rhyme, third and fourth don't come amiss. I am very anxious on this business, and I do hope that the very trouble I occasion you will plead its own excuse, and that it will tend to show my endeavour to make the most of the time allotted. I wish I had known it months ago, for in that case I had not left one line standing on another. I always scrawl in this way, and smooth as much as I can, but never sufficiently; and, latterly, I can weave a nine-line stanza faster than a couplet, for which measure I have not the cunning. When I began 'Childe Harold,' I had never tried Spenser's measure, and now I cannot scribble in any other.

"After all, my dear lord, if you can get a decent address elsewhere, don't hesitate to put this aside. Why did you not trust your own muse? I am very sure she would have been triumphant, and saved the committee their trouble — 'tis a joyful one' to me, but I fear I shall not satisfy even myself. After the account you sent me, 'tis no compliment to say you would have beaten your candidates; but I mean that, in *that* case, there would have been no occasion for their being beaten at all.

"There are but two decent prologues in our tongue, — Pope's to 'Cato,' Johnson's to Drury

Lane. These, with the epilogue to the 'Distrest Mother,' and, I think, one of Goldsmith's, and a prologue of old Colman's to Beaumont and Fletcher's "Philaster," are the best things of the kind we have.

"P. S. I am diluted to the throat with medicine for the stone; and Boisragon wants me to try a warm climate for the winter — but I won't."

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 27, 1812.

"I have just received your very kind letter, and hope you have met with a second copy corrected and addressed to Holland House, with some omissions, and this new couplet:

"As glared each rising flash,[21] and ghastly shone
The skies with lightnings awful as their own.

As to remarks, I can only say I will alter and acquiesce in anything. With regard to the part which Whitbread wishes to omit, I believe the address will go off *quicker* without it, though, like the agility of the Hottentot, at the expense of its vigour. I leave to your choice entirely the different specimens of stucco-work; and a *brick* of your own will also much improve my Babylonish turret. I should like Elliston to have it, with your leave. 'Adorn' and 'mourn' are lawful rhymes in Pope's

'Death of the Unfortunate Lady.' Gray has 'forlorn' and 'mourn;' and 'torn' and 'mourn' are in Smollet's famous 'Tears of Scotland.'

"As there will probably be an outcry amongst the rejected, I hope the committee will testify (if it be needful) that I sent in nothing to the congress whatever, with or without a name, as your lordship well knows. All I have to do with it is with and through you; and though I, of course, wish to satisfy the audience, I do assure you my first object is to comply with your request, and in so doing to show the sense I have of the many obligations you have conferred upon me. Yours ever, B."

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 29, 1812.

"Shakespeare certainly ceased to reign in *one* of his kingdoms, as George III. did in America, and George IV. may in Ireland.[22] Now, we have nothing to do out of our own realms, and when the monarchy was gone, his majesty had but a barren sceptre. I have *cut away*, you will see, and altered, but make it what you please; only I do implore, for my *own* gratification, one lash on those accursed quadrupeds — 'a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.' I have altered 'wave,' etc., and the 'fire,' and so forth for the timid.

"Let me hear from you when convenient, and believe me, etc.

"P. S. Do let *that* stand, and cut out elsewhere. I shall choke, if we must overlook their d——d menagerie."

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"Far be from him that hour which asks in vain
Tears such as flow for Garrick in his strain;

or,

"Far be that hour that vainly asks in turn
Such verse for him as { *crowned his* / wept o'er } Garrick's urn.

"September 30, 1812.

"Will you choose between these added to the lines on Sheridan?[23] I think they will wind up the panegyric, and agree with the train of thought preceding them.

"Now, one word as to the committee, — how could they resolve on a rough copy of an Address never sent in, unless you had been good enough to retain in memory, or on paper, the thing they have been good enough to adopt? By the by, the circumstances of the case should make the committee less 'avidus gloriæ,' for all praise of them would look plaguy suspicious. If necessary to be stated at all, the simple facts bear them out. They surely had a right to act as they pleased. My sole object is one which, I trust, my whole conduct has shown, viz. that I did nothing insidious, — sent in no address *whatever* — but, when applied

to, did my best for them and myself; but, above all, that there was no undue partiality, which will be what the rejected will endeavour to make out. Fortunately — most fortunately — I sent in no lines on the occasion. For I am sure that had they, in that case, been preferred, it would have been asserted that *I* was known, and owed the preference to private friendship. This is what we shall probably have to encounter; but, if once spoken and approved, we sha'n't be much embarrassed by their brilliant conjectures; and, as to criticism, an *old* author, like an old bull, grows cooler (or ought) at every baiting.

"The only thing would be to avoid a party on the night of delivery — afterward, the more the better, and the whole transaction inevitably tends to a good deal of discussion. Murray tells me there are myriads of ironical addresses ready — *some*, in imitation of what is called *my style*. If they are as good as the 'Probationary Odes,' or 'Hawkins's Pipe of Tobacco,' it will not be bad fun for the imitated.

"Ever," etc.

The time comprised in the series of letters to Lord Holland, of which the above are specimens, Lord Byron passed, for the most part, at Cheltenham; and during the same period the following letters to other correspondents were written.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"HIGH STREET, CHELTENHAM, Sept. 5, 1812.

"Pray have the goodness to send those despatches, and a number of the *Edinburgh Review* with the rest. I hope you have written to Mr. Thompson, thanked him in my name for his present, and told him that I shall be truly happy to comply with his request. How do you go on? and when is the graven image, 'with *bays and wicked rhyme upon 't*,' to grace, or disgrace, some of our tardy editions?

"Send me 'Rokeby.' Who the devil is he? — no matter, he has good connections, and will be well introduced. I thank you for your inquiries: I am so so, but my thermometer is sadly below the poetical point. What will you give *me* or *mine* for a poem of six cantos (*when complete* — *no* rhyme, *no* recompense), as like the last two as I can make them? I have some ideas that one day may be embodied, and till winter I shall have much leisure.

"P. S. My last question is in the true style of Grub Street; but, like Jeremy Diddler, I only 'ask for information.' Send me Adair on 'Diet and Regimen,' just republished by Ridgway."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"CHELTENHAM, Sept. 14, 1812.

"The parcels contained some letters and verses, all but one anonymous and complimentary, and

very anxious for my conversion from certain infidelities into which my good-natured correspondents conceive me to have fallen. The books were presents of a *convertible* kind. Also, 'Christian Knowledge' and the 'Bioscope,' a religious Dial of Life explained; and to the author of the former (Cadell, publisher), I beg you will forward my best thanks for his letter, his present, and, above all, his good intentions. The 'Bioscope' contained a MS. copy of very excellent verses, from whom I know not, but evidently the composition of some one in the habit of writing, and of writing well. I do not know if he be the author of the 'Bioscope' which accompanied them; but whoever he is, if you can discover him, thank him from me most heartily. The other letters were from ladies, who are welcome to convert me when they please; and if I can discover them, and they be young, as they say they are, I could convince them perhaps of my devotion. I had also a letter from Mr. Walpole on matters of this world, which I have answered.

"So you are Lucien's publisher? I am promised an interview with him, and think I shall ask *you* for a letter of introduction, as 'the gods have made him poetical.' From whom could it come with a better grace than from *his* publisher and mine? Is it not somewhat treasonable in you to have to do with a relative of the 'direful foe,' as the *Morning Post* calls his brother?

"But my book on 'Diet and Regimen,' where

is it? I thirst for Scott's 'Rokeby;' let me have your first-begotten copy. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* is all very well, and not a bit worse than the *Quarterly*, and at least less harmless. By the by, have you secured my books? I want all the reviews, at least the critiques, quarterly, monthly, etc., Portuguese and English, extracted, and bound up in one volume for my *old age;* and pray, sort my Romaic books, and get the volumes lent to Mr. Hobhouse — he has had them now a long time. If anything occurs, you will favour me with a line, and in winter we shall be nearer neighbours.

"P. S. I was applied to, to write the address for Drury Lane, but the moment I heard of the contest, I gave up the idea of contending against all Grub Street, and threw a few thoughts on the subject into the fire. I did this out of respect to you, being sure you would have turned off any of your authors who had entered the lists with such scurvy competitors. To triumph would have been no glory; and to have been defeated — 'sdeath! — I would have choked myself, like Otway, with a quartern loaf; so, remember I had, and have, nothing to do with it, upon *my honour*."

TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"CHELTENHAM, September 28, 1812.

"MY DEAR BANKES: — When you point out to one how people can be intimate at the distance

of some seventy leagues, I will plead guilty to your charge, and accept your farewell, but not *wittingly*, till you give me some better reason than my silence, which merely proceeded from a notion founded on your own declaration of *old*, that you hated writing and receiving letters. Besides, how was I to find out a man of many residences? If I had addressed you *now*, it had been to your borough, where I must have conjectured you were amongst your constituents. So now, in despite of Mr. N. and Lady W., you shall be as 'much better' as the Hexham post-office will allow me to make you. I do assure you I am much indebted to you for thinking of me at all, and can't spare you even from amongst the superabundance of friends with whom you suppose me surrounded.

"You heard that Newstead[24] is sold — the sum £140,000; sixty to remain in mortgage on the estate for three years, paying interest, of course. Rochdale is also likely to do well — so my worldly matters are mending. I have been here some time drinking the waters, simply because there are waters to drink, and they are very medicinal, and sufficiently disgusting. In a few days I set out for Lord Jersey's, but return here, where I am quite alone, go out very little, and enjoy in its fullest extent the 'dolce far niente.' What you are about, I cannot guess, even from your date, — not dauncing to the sound of the gitourney in the Halls of the Lowthers? one of whom is here, ill,

poor thing, with a phthisic. I heard that you passed through here (at the sordid inn where I first alighted) the very day before I arrived in these parts. We had a very pleasant set here; at first the Jerseys, Melbournes, Cowpers, and Hollands, but all gone; and the only persons I know are the Rawdons and Oxfords, with some later acquaintances of less brilliant descent.

"But I do not trouble them much; and as for your rooms and your assemblies, 'they are not dreamed of in our philosophy!' Did you read of a sad accident in the Wye t'other day? a dozen drowned, and Mr. Rossoe, a corpulent gentleman, preserved by a boat-hook or an eel-spear, begged, when he heard his wife was saved — no — *lost* — to be thrown in again! — as if he could not have thrown himself in, had he wished it; but this passes for a trait of sensibility. What strange beings men are, in and out of the Wye!

"I have to ask you a thousand pardons for not fulfilling some orders before I left town; but if you knew all the cursed entanglements I *had* to wade through, it would be unnecessary to beg your forgiveness. When will Parliament (the new one) meet? — in sixty days, on account of Ireland, I presume: the Irish election will demand a longer period for completion than the constitutional allotment. Yours, of course, is safe, and all your side of the question. Salamanca is the ministerial watchword, and all will go well with you. I

hope you will speak more frequently, I am sure at least you *ought*, and it will be expected. I see Portman means to stand again. Good night.

"Ever yours most affectionately,

"Μπαίρων." [25]

TO MR. MURRAY.

"CHELTENHAM, September 27, 1812.

"I sent in no address whatever to the committee; but out of nearly one hundred (this is *confidential*), none have been deemed worth acceptance; and in consequence of their *subsequent* application to *me* I have written a prologue, which *has* been received and will be spoken. The MS. is now in the hands of Lord Holland.

"I write this merely to say that (however it is received by the audience) you will publish it in the next edition of 'Childe Harold;' and I only beg you at present to keep my name secret till you hear further from me, and as soon as possible I wish you to have a correct copy, to do with as you think proper.

"P. S. I should wish a few copies printed off *before*, that the newspaper copies may be correct *after* the *delivery*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"CHELTENHAM, Oct. 12, 1812.

"I have a very *strong objection* to the engraving of the portrait,[26] and request that it may, on no

account, be prefixed; but let *all* the proofs be burnt, and the plate broken. I will be at the expense which has been incurred; it is but fair that *I* should, since I cannot permit the publication. I beg, as a particular favour, that you will lose no time in having this done, for which I have reasons that I will state when I see you. Forgive all the trouble I have occasioned you.

"I have received no account of the reception of the address, but see it is vituperated in the papers, which does not much embarrass an *old author*. I leave it to your own judgment to add it, or not, to your next edition when required. Pray comply *strictly* with my wishes as to the engraving, and believe me, etc.

"P. S. Favour me with an answer, as I shall not be easy till I hear that the proofs, etc., are destroyed. I hear that the *Satirist* has reviewed 'Childe Harold,' in what manner I need not ask; but I wish to know if the old personalities are revived? I have a better reason for asking this than any that merely concerns myself; but in publications of that kind, others, particularly female names, are sometimes introduced."

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"CHELTENHAM, Oct. 14, 1812.

"MY DEAR LORD: — I perceive that the papers, yea, even Perry's, are somewhat ruffled at the in-

judicious preference of the committee. My friend Perry has, indeed, 'et tu Brute'-d me rather scurvily, for which I will send him, for the *M. C.*, the next epigram I scribble, as a token of my full forgiveness.

"Do the committee mean to enter into no explanation of their proceedings? You must see there is a leaning toward a charge of partiality. You will, at least, acquit me of any great anxiety to push myself before so many elder and better anonymous, to whom the twenty guineas (which I take to be about two thousand pounds *Bank* currency) and the honour would have been equally welcome. 'Honour,' I see, 'hath no skill in paragraph-writing.'

"I wish to know how it went off at the second reading, and whether any one has had the grace to give it a glance of approbation. I have seen no paper but Perry's and two Sunday ones. Perry is severe, and the others silent. If, however, you and your committee are not now dissatisfied with your own judgments, I shall not much embarrass myself about the brilliant remarks of the journals. My own opinion upon it is what it always was, perhaps pretty near that of the public.

"Believe me, my dear lord, etc.

"P. S. My best respects to Lady H., whose smiles will be very consolatory, even at this distance."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"CHELTENHAM, Oct. 18, 1812.

"Will you have the goodness to get this parody of a peculiar kind[27] (for all the first lines are *Busby's* entire) inserted in several of the papers (*correctly* — and copied *correctly; my hand* is difficult) — particularly the *Morning Chronicle?* Tell Mr. Perry I forgive him all he has said, and may say against *my address*, but he will allow me to deal with the doctor (*audi alteram partem*) and not *betray* me. I cannot think what has befallen Mr. Perry, for of yore we were very good friends; but no matter, only get this inserted.

"I have a poem on 'Waltzing' for *you*, of which I make *you* a present; but it must be anonymous. It is in the old style of 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.'

"P. S. With the next edition of 'Childe Harold' you may print the first fifty or a hundred opening lines of the 'Curse of Minerva' down to the couplet beginning —

"Mortal ('twas thus she spake), etc.

Of course, the moment *satire* begins, there you will stop, and the opening is the best part."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Oct. 19, 1812.

"Many thanks, but I *must* pay the *damage*, and will thank you to tell me the amount for the en-

graving. I think the 'Rejected Addresses' by far the best thing of the kind since the Rolliad, and wish *you* had published them. Tell the author 'I forgive him, were he twenty times over a satirist;' and think his imitations not at all inferior to the famous ones of Hawkins Browne. He must be a man of very lively wit, and less scurrilous than wits often are; altogether, I very much admire the performance, and wish it all success. The *Satirist* has taken a new tone, as you will see; we have now, I think, finished with 'Childe Harold's' critics. I have in *hand* a *Satire* on '*Waltzing*,' which you must publish anonymously: it is not long, not quite two hundred lines, but will make a very small boarded pamphlet. In a few days you shall have it.

"P. S. The editor of the *Satirist* ought to be thanked for his revocation; it is done handsomely, after five years' warfare."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Oct. 23, 1812.

"Thanks, as usual. You go on boldly; but have a care of *glutting* the public, who have by this time had enough of 'Childe Harold.' 'Waltzing' shall be prepared. It is rather above two hundred lines, with an introductory letter to the publisher. I think of publishing, with 'Childe Harold,' the opening lines of the 'Curse of Minerva,' as far as the first speech of Pallas,—because

some of the readers like that part better than any I have ever written, and as it contains nothing to affect the subject of the subsequent portion, it will find a place as a *Descriptive Fragment.*

"The *plate* is *broken?* between ourselves, it was unlike the picture; and besides, upon the whole, the frontispiece of an author's visage is but a paltry exhibition. At all events, *this* would have been no recommendation to the book. I am sure Sanders would not have *survived* the engraving. By the by, the *picture* may remain with *you* or *him* (which you please), till my return. The *one* of two remaining copies is at your service till I can give you a *better;* the other must be *burned peremptorily.* Again, do not forget that I have an account with you, and *that* this is *included.* I give you too much *trouble* to allow you to incur *expense* also.

"You best know how far this 'Address Riot' will affect the future sale of 'Childe Harold.' I like the volume of 'Rejected Addresses' better and better. The other parody which Perry has received is mine also (I believe). It is Doctor Busby's speech versified. You are removing to Albemarle Street, I find, and I rejoice that we shall be nearer neighbours. I am going to Lord Oxford's, but letters here will be forwarded. When at leisure, all communications from you will be willingly received by the humblest of your scribes. Did Mr. Ward write the review of Horne Tooke's life in the *Quarterly?* it is excellent."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"CHELTENHAM, November 22, 1812.

"On my return here from Lord Oxford's, I found your obliging note, and will thank you to retain the letters, and any other subsequent ones to the same address, till I arrive in town to claim them, which will probably be in a few days. I have in charge a curious and very long MS. poem, written by Lord Brooke (the *friend* of Sir *Philip Sidney*), which I wish to submit to the inspection of Mr. Gifford, with the following queries: first, whether it has ever been published, and, secondly (if not), whether it is worth publication? It is from Lord Oxford's library, and must have escaped or been overlooked amongst the MSS. of the Harleian Miscellany. The writing is Lord Brooke's, except a different hand toward the close. It is very long, and in the six-line stanza. It is not for me to hazard an opinion upon its merits; but I would take the liberty, if not too troublesome, to submit it to Mr. Gifford's judgment, which, from his excellent edition of Massinger, I should conceive to be as decisive on the writings of that age as on those of our own.

"Now for a less agreeable and important topic. How came Mr. *Mac-Somebody*, without consulting you or me, to prefix the address of his volume[28] of '*Dejected* Addresses?' Is not this somewhat larcenous? I think the ceremony of leave might

have been asked, though I have no objection to the thing itself; and leave the 'hundred and eleven' to tire themselves with 'base comparisons.' I should think the ingenuous public tolerably sick of the subject, and, except the parodies, I have not interfered, nor shall; indeed I did not know that Doctor Busby had published his 'Apologetical Letter' and 'Postscript,' or I should have recalled them. But I confess, I looked upon his conduct in a different light before its appearance. I see some mountebank has taken Alderman Birch's name to vituperate Doctor Busby; he had much better have pilfered his pastry, which I should imagine the more valuable ingredient — at least for a puff. Pray secure me a copy of Woodfall's new Junius, and believe me," etc.

TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"December 26.

"The multitude of your recommendations has already superseded my humble endeavours to be of use to you; and, indeed, most of my principal friends are returned. Leake from Joannina, Canning and Adair from the city of the Faithful, and at Smyrna no letter is necessary, as the consuls are always willing to do everything for personages of respectability. I have sent you *three*, one to Gibraltar, which, though of no great necessity, will, perhaps, put you on a more intimate footing with a very pleasant family there. You will very soon

find out that a man of any consequence has very little occasion for any letters but to ministers and bankers, and of them we have already plenty, I will be sworn.

"It is by no means improbable that I shall go in the spring, and if you will fix any place of rendezvous about August, I will *write* or *join* you. When in Albania, I wish you would inquire after Dervise Tahiri and Vascillie (or Bazil), and make my respects to the viziers, both there and in the Morea. If you mention my name to Suleyman of Thebes, I think it will not hurt you; if I had my dragoman, or wrote Turkish, I could have given you letters of *real service;* but to the English they are hardly requisite, and the Greeks themselves can be of little advantage. Liston you know already, and I do not, as he was not then minister. Mind you visit Ephesus and the Troad, and let me hear from you when you please. I believe G. Forresti is now at Yanina, but if not, whoever is there will be too happy to assist you. Be particular about *firmans;* never allow yourself to be bullied, for you are better protected in Turkey than anywhere; trust not the Greeks; and take some *knicknackeries* for *presents* — *watches, pistols*, etc., to the beys and pachas. If you find one Demetrius, at Athens or elsewhere, I can recommend him as a good dragoman. I hope to join you, however; but you will find swarms of English now in the Levant.

"Believe me," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 20, 1813.

"In 'Horace in London' I perceive some stanzas on Lord Elgin in which (waiving the kind compliment to myself[29]) I heartily concur. I wish I had the pleasure of Mr. Smith's acquaintance, as I could communicate the curious anecdote you read in Mr. T.'s letter. If he would like it, he can have the *substance* for his second edition; if not, I shall add it to our next, though I think we already have enough of Lord Elgin.

"What I have read of this work seems admirably done. My praise, however, is not much worth the author's having; but you may thank him in my name for *his*. The idea is new — we have excellent imitations of the satires, etc., by Pope; but I remember but one imitative ode in his works, and *none* anywhere else. I can hardly suppose that *they* have lost any fame by the fate of the *farce;* but even should this be the case, the present publication will again place them on their pinnacle.

"Yours," etc.

It has already been stated that the pecuniary supplies, which he found it necessary to raise on arriving at majority, were procured for him on ruinously usurious terms.[30] To some transactions connected with this subject, the following characteristic letter refers.

TO MR. ROGERS.

"March 25, 1813.

"I enclose you a draft for the usurious interest due to Lord ———'s *protégé;* I also could wish you would state thus much for me to his lordship. Though the transaction speaks plainly in itself for the borrower's folly and the lender's usury, it never was my intention to *quash* the demand, as I *legally* might, nor to withhold payment of principal, or, perhaps, even *unlawful* interest. You know what my situation has been, and what it is. I have parted with an estate (which has been in my family for nearly three hundred years, and was never disgraced by being in possession of a *lawyer*, a *churchman*, or a *woman*, during that period), to liquidate this and similar demands; and the payment of the purchase is still withheld, and may be, perhaps, for years. If, therefore, I am under the necessity of making those persons *wait* for their money (which, considering the terms, they can afford to suffer), it is my misfortune.

"When I arrived at majority in 1809, I offered my own security on *legal* interest, and it was refused. *Now*, I will not accede to this. This man I may have seen, but I have no recollection of the names of any parties but the *agents* and the securities. The moment I can it is assuredly my intention to pay my debts. This person's case may be a hard one; but, under all circumstances, what is

mine? I could not foresee that the purchaser of my estate was to demur in paying for it.

"I am glad it happens to be in my power so far to accommodate my Israelite, and only wish I could do as much for the rest of the Twelve Tribes.

"Ever yours, dear R.,

"Bn."

At the beginning of this year, Mr. Murray having it in contemplation to publish an edition of the two cantos of "Childe Harold" with engravings, the noble author entered with much zeal into his plan; and, in a note on the subject to Mr. Murray, says: "Westall has, I believe, agreed to illustrate your book, and I fancy one of the engravings will be from the pretty little girl you saw the other day,[31] though without her name, and merely as a model for some sketch connected with the subject. I would also have the portrait (which you saw to-day) of the friend who is mentioned in the text at the close of Canto First, and in the notes, — which are subjects sufficient to authorise that addition."

Early in the spring he brought out, anonymously, his poem on "Waltzing," which, though full of very lively satire, fell so far short of what was now expected from him by the public, that the disavowal of it, which, as we see by the following letter, he thought right to put forth, found ready credence.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 21, 1813.

"I shall be in town by Sunday next, and will call and have some conversation on the subject of Westall's designs. I am to sit to him for a picture at the request of a friend of mine, and as Sanders's is not a good one, you will probably prefer the other. I wish you to have Sanders's taken down and sent to my lodgings immediately — before my arrival. I hear that a certain malicious publication on 'Waltzing' is attributed to me. This report, I suppose, you will take care to contradict, as the author, I am sure, will not like that I should wear his cap and bells. Mr. Hobhouse's quarto will be out immediately; pray send to the author for an early copy, which I wish to take abroad with me.

"P. S. I see the *Examiner* threatens some observations upon you next week. What can you have done to share the wrath which has heretofore been principally expended upon the prince? I presume all your Scribleri will be drawn up in battle-array in defence of the modern Tonson — Mr. Bucke, for instance.

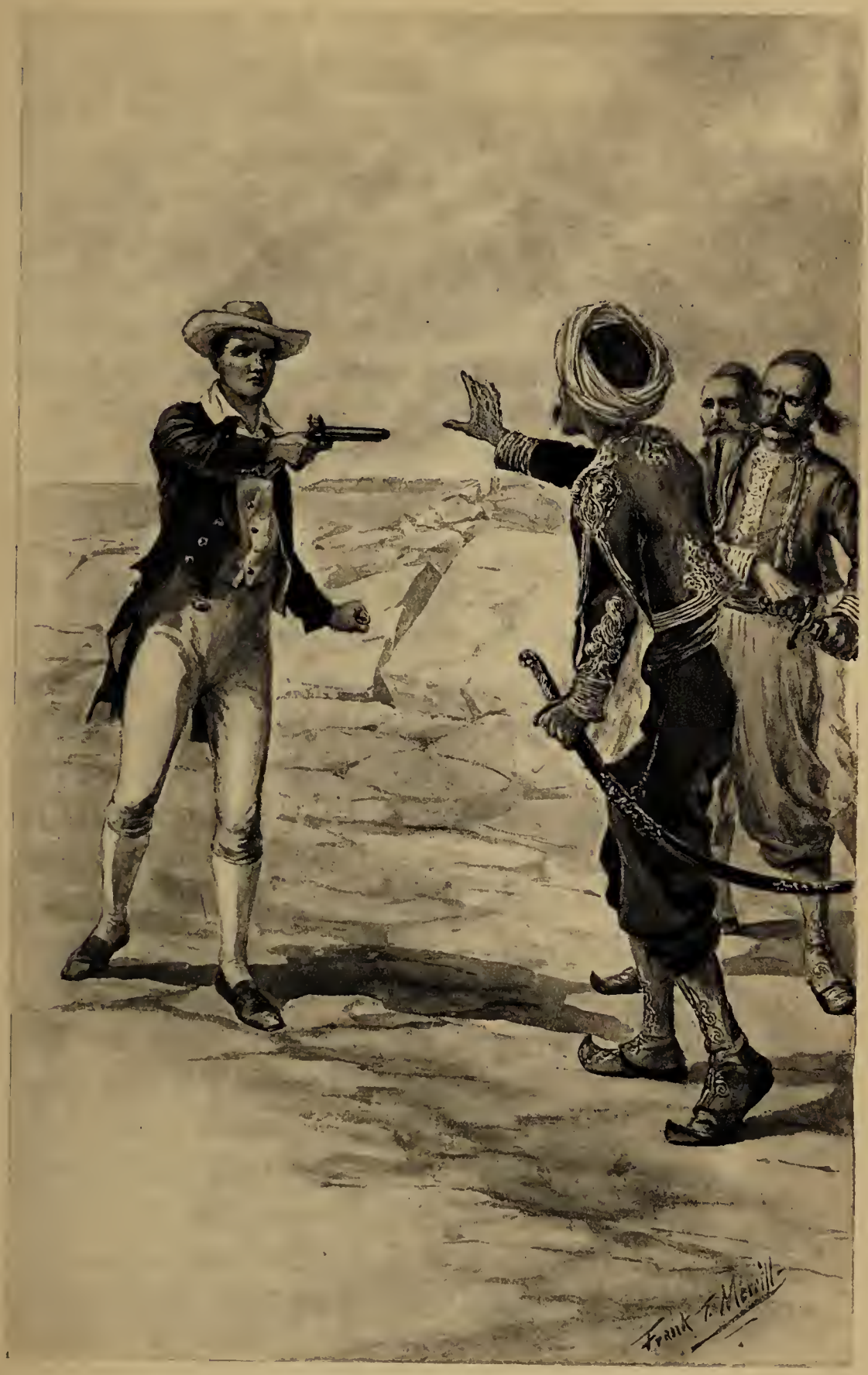
"Send in my account to Bennet Street, as I wish to settle it before sailing."

In the month of May appeared his wild and beautiful "Fragment," "The Giaour;" and though, in its first flight from his hands, some of the fairest

feathers of its wing were yet wanting, the public hailed this new offspring of his genius with wonder and delight. The idea of writing a poem in fragments had been suggested to him by the "Columbus" of Mr. Rogers; and, whatever objections may lie against such a plan in general, it must be allowed to have been well suited to the impatient temperament of Byron, as enabling him to overleap those mechanical difficulties, which, in a regular narrative, embarrass, if not chill, the poet, — leaving it to the imagination of his readers to fill up the intervals between those abrupt bursts of passion in which his chief power lay. The story, too, of the poem possessed that stimulating charm for him, almost indispensable to his fancy, of being in some degree connected with himself, — an event in which he had been personally concerned, while on his travels, having supplied the groundwork on which the fiction was founded. After the appearance of "The Giaour," some incorrect statement of this romantic incident having got into circulation, the noble author requested of his friend, the Marquis of Sligo, who had visited Athens soon after it happened, to furnish him with his recollections on the subject; and the following is the answer which Lord Sligo returned:

"ALBANY, Monday, August 31, 1813.

"MY DEAR BYRON: — You have requested me to tell you all that I heard at Athens about the


Frank T. Merrill

affair of that girl who was so near being put an end to while you were there; you have asked me to mention every circumstance, in the remotest degree relating to it, which I heard. In compliance with your wishes, I write to you all I heard, and I cannot imagine it to be very far from the fact, as the circumstance happened only a day or two before I arrived at Athens, and, consequently, was a matter of common conversation at the time.

"The new governor, unaccustomed to have the same intercourse with the Christians as his predecessor, had of course the barbarous Turkish ideas with regard to women. In consequence, and in compliance with the strict letter of the Mohammedan law, he ordered this girl to be sewed up in a sack, and thrown into the sea, — as is, indeed, quite customary at Constantinople. As you were returning from bathing in the Piræus, you met the procession going down to execute the sentence of the Waywode on this unfortunate girl. Report continues to say, that on finding out what the object of their journey was, and who was the miserable sufferer, you immediately interfered; and on some delay in obeying your orders, you were obliged to inform the leader of the escort that force should make him comply; that, on further hesitation, you drew a pistol, and told him that if he did not immediately obey your orders, and come back with you to the Aga's house, you would shoot him dead. On this, the man turned

about and went with you to the governor's house; here you succeeded, partly by personal threats, and partly by bribery and entreaty, to procure her pardon on condition of her leaving Athens. I was told that you then conveyed her in safety to the convent, and despatched her off at night to Thebes, where she found a safe asylum. Such is the story I heard, as nearly as I can recollect it at present. Should you wish to ask me any further questions about it, I shall be very ready and willing to answer them. I remain, my dear Byron, Yours, very sincerely,

"SLIGO.

"I am afraid you will hardly be able to read this scrawl; but I am so hurried with the preparations for my journey, that you must excuse it."

Of the prodigal flow of his fancy, when its sources were once opened on any subject, "The Giaour" affords one of the most remarkable instances, — this poem having accumulated under his hand, both in printing and through successive editions, till from four hundred lines, of which it consisted in his first copy, it at present amounts to nearly fourteen hundred. The plan, indeed, which he had adopted, of a series of fragments, — a set of "orient pearls at random strung," — left him free to introduce, without reference to more than the general complexion of his story, what-

ever sentiments or images his fancy, in its excursions, could collect; and how little fettered he was by any regard to connection in these additions appears from a note which accompanied his own copy of the paragraph commencing "Fair clime, where every season smiles," in which he says, "I have not yet fixed the place of insertion for the following lines, but will, when I see you — as I have no copy."

Even into this new passage, rich as it was at first, his fancy afterward poured a fresh infusion, — the whole of its most picturesque portion, from the line, "For there, the Rose o'er crag or vale," down to "And turn to groans his roundelay," having been suggested to him during revision. In order to show, however, that though so rapid in the first heat of composition, he formed no exception to that law which imposes labour as the price of perfection, I shall here extract a few verses from his original draft of this paragraph, by comparing which with the form they wear at present[32] we may learn to appreciate the value of these after-touches of the master.

"Fair clime! where *ceaseless summer* smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And *give* to loneliness delight.
There *shine the bright abodes ye seek,*
Like dimples upon Ocean's cheek, —

So smiling round the waters lave
These Edens of the eastern wave.
Or if, at times, the transient breeze
Break the *smooth* crystal of the seas,
Or *brush* one blossom from the trees,
How *grateful* is the gentle air
That wakes and wafts the *fragrance* there."

Among the other passages added to this edition (which was either the third or fourth, and between which and the first there intervened but about six weeks) was that most beautiful and melancholy illustration of the lifeless aspect of Greece, beginning "He who hath bent him o'er the dead," — of which the most gifted critic of our day [33] has justly pronounced, that "it contains an image more true, more mournful, and more exquisitely finished, than any we can recollect in the whole compass of poetry." [34] To the same edition also were added, among other accessions of wealth,[35] those lines, "The cygnet proudly walks the water," and the impassioned verses, "My memory now is but the tomb."

On my rejoining him in town this spring, I found the enthusiasm about his writings and himself, which I left so prevalent, both in the world of literature and in society, grown, if anything, still more general and intense. In the immediate circle, perhaps, around him, familiarity of intercourse might have begun to produce its usual disenchanting effects. His own liveliness and un-

reserve, on a more intimate acquaintance, would not be long in dispelling that charm of poetic sadness, which to the eyes of distant observers hung about him; while the romantic notions, connected by some of his fair readers with those past and nameless loves alluded to in his poems, ran some risk of abatement from too near an acquaintance with the supposed objects of his fancy and fondness at present. A poet's mistress should remain, if possible, as imaginary a being to others as, in most of the attributes he clothes her with, she has been to himself; the reality, however fair, being always sure to fall short of the picture which a too lavish fancy has drawn of it. Could we call up in array before us all the beauties whom the love of poets has immortalised, — from the high-born dame to the plebeian damsel, from the Lauras and Sacharissas down to the Cloes and Jeannies, — we should, it is to be feared, sadly unpeople our imaginations of many a bright tenant that poesy has lodged there, and find, in more than one instance, our admiration of the faith and fancy of the worshipper increased by our discovery of the worthlessness of the idol.

But, whatever of its first romantic impression the personal character of the poet may, from such causes, have lost in the circle he most frequented, this disappointment of the imagination was far more than compensated by the frank, social, and engaging qualities, both of disposition and manner,

which, on a nearer intercourse, he disclosed, as well as by that entire absence of any literary assumption or pedantry, which entitled him fully to the praise bestowed by Sprat upon Cowley, that few could "ever discover he was a great poet by his discourse." While thus, by his intimates, and those who had got, as it were, behind the scenes of his fame, he was seen in his true colours, as well of weakness as of amiableness, on strangers and such as were out of this immediate circle the spell of his poetical character still continued to operate; and the fierce gloom and sternness of his imaginary personages were, by the greater number of them, supposed to belong, not only as regarded mind, but manners, to himself. So prevalent and persevering has been this notion, that, in some disquisitions on his character published since his death, and containing otherwise many just and striking views, we find, in the professed portrait drawn of him, such features as the following: "Lord Byron had a stern, direct, severe mind; a sarcastic, disdainful, gloomy temper. He had no light sympathy with heartless cheerfulness; upon the surface was sourness, discontent, displeasure, ill will. Beneath all this weight of clouds and darkness,"[36] etc.

Of the sort of double aspect which he thus presented, as viewed by the world and by his friends, he was himself fully aware; and it not only amused him, but, as a proof of the versatility of his powers, flattered his pride. He was, indeed,

as I have already remarked, by no means insensible or inattentive to the effect he produced personally on society; and though the brilliant station he had attained, since the commencement of my acquaintance with him, made not the slightest alteration in the unaffectedness of his private intercourse, I could perceive, I thought, with reference to the external world, some slight changes in his conduct, which seemed indicative of the effects of his celebrity upon him. Among other circumstances, I observed that, whether from shyness of the general gaze, or from a notion, like Livy's, that men of eminence should not too much familiarise the public to their persons,[37] he avoided showing himself in the mornings, and in crowded places, much more than was his custom when we first became acquainted. The preceding year, before his name had grown "so rife and celebrated," we had gone together to the exhibition at Somerset House, and other such places;[38] and the true reason, no doubt, of his present reserve, in abstaining from all such miscellaneous haunts, was the sensitiveness, so often referred to, on the subject of his lameness, — a feeling which the curiosity of the public eye, now attracted to this infirmity by his fame, could not fail, he knew, to put rather painfully to the proof.

Among the many gay hours we passed together this spring, I remember particularly the wild flow of his spirits one evening, when we had accom-

panied Mr. Rogers home from some early assembly, and when Lord Byron, who, according to his frequent custom, had not dined for the last two days, found his hunger no longer governable, and called aloud for "something to eat." Our repast — of his own choosing — was simple bread and cheese; and seldom have I partaken of so joyous a supper. It happened that our host had just received a presentation copy of a volume of poems, written professedly in imitation of the old English writers, and containing, like many of these models, a good deal that was striking and beautiful, mixed up with much that was trifling, fantastic, and absurd. In our mood, at the moment, it was only with these latter qualities that either Lord Byron or I felt disposed to indulge ourselves; and, in turning over the pages, we found, it must be owned, abundant matter for mirth. In vain did Mr. Rogers, in justice to the author, endeavour to direct our attention to some of the beauties of the work: it suited better our purpose (as is too often the case with more deliberate critics) to pounce only on such passages as ministered to the laughing humour that possessed us. In this sort of hunt through the volume, we at length lighted on the discovery that our host, in addition to his sincere approbation of some of its contents, had also the motive of gratitude for standing by its author, as one of the poems was a warm and, I need not add, well-deserved panegyric on himself.

We were, however, too far gone in nonsense for even this eulogy, in which we both so heartily agreed, to stop us. The opening line of the poem was, as well as I can recollect, "When Rogers o'er this labour bent," and Lord Byron undertook to read it aloud; but he found it impossible to get beyond the first two words. Our laughter had now increased to such a pitch that nothing could restrain it. Two or three times he began; but no sooner had the words "When Rogers" passed his lips, than our fit burst forth afresh, — till even Mr. Rogers himself, with all his feeling of our injustice, found it impossible not to join us; and we were, at last, all three, in such a state of inextinguishable laughter, that, had the author himself been of the party, I question much whether he could have resisted the infection.

A day or two after, Lord Byron sent me the following:

"My dear Moore: — 'When Rogers' must not see the enclosed, which I send for your perusal. I am ready to fix any day you like for our visit. Was not Sheridan good upon the whole? The 'Poulterer' was the first and best.[39]

"Ever yours," etc.

1.

"When T—— this damned nonsense sent,
(I hope I am not violent),
Nor men nor gods knew what he meant.

2.

"And since not ev'n our Rogers' praise
To common sense his thoughts could raise —
Why *would* they let him print his lays?

3.

. . . . . .

4.

. . . . . .

5.

"To me, divine Apollo, grant — O!
Hermilda's first and second canto,
I'm fitting up a new portmanteau;

6.

"And thus to furnish decent lining,
My own and others' bays I'm twining —
So gentle T——, throw me thine in."

On the same day I received from him the following additional scraps. The lines in italics are from the eulogy that provoked his waggish comments.

"TO ——

1.

"'*I lay my branch of laurel down.*'

"*Thou* 'lay thy branch of *laurel* down!'
Why, what thou'st stole is not enow;
And, were it lawfully thine own,
Does Rogers want it most, or thou?

Keep to thyself thy wither'd bough,
Or send it back to Doctor Donne —
Were justice done to both, I trow,
He'd have but little, and thou — none.

2.

"'*Then thus to form Apollo's crown.*'

"A crown! why, twist it how you will,
Thy chaplet must be foolscap still.
When next you visit Delphi's town,
Enquire amongst your fellow-lodgers,
They'll tell you Phœbus gave his crown,
Some years before your birth, to Rogers.

3.

"'*Let every other bring his own.*'

"When coals to Newcastle are carried,
And owls sent to Athens as wonders,
From his spouse when the —— 's unmarried,
Or Liverpool weeps o'er his blunders;
When Tories and Whigs cease to quarrel,
When C——'s wife has an heir,
Then Rogers shall ask us for laurel,
And thou shalt have plenty to spare."

The mention which he makes of Sheridan in the note just cited affords a fit opportunity of producing, from one of his journals, some particulars which he has noted down respecting this extraordinary man, for whose talents he entertained the most unbounded admiration, — rating him, in

natural powers, far above all his great political contemporaries.

"In society I have met Sheridan frequently; he was superb! He had a sort of liking for me, and never attacked me, at least to my face, and he did everybody else, — high names, and wits, and orators, some of them poets also. I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Staël, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others (whose names, as friends, I set not down) of good fame and ability.

"The last time I met him was, I think, at Sir Gilbert Heathcote's, where he was as quick as ever — no, it was not the last time; the last time was at Douglas Kinnaird's.

"I have met him in all places and parties, — at Whitehall with the Melbournes, at the Marquis of Tavistock's, at Robins's the auctioneer's, at Sir Humphrey Davy's, at Sam Rogers's, — in short, in most kinds of company, and always found him very convivial and delightful.

"I have seen Sheridan weep two or three times. It may be that he was maudlin; but this only renders it more impressive, for who would see —

> "'From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
> And Swift expire a driveller and a show?'

Once I saw him cry at Robins's the auctioneer's, after a splendid dinner, full of great names and high spirits. I had the honour of sitting next

to Sheridan. The occasion of his tears was some observation or other upon the subject of the sturdiness of the Whigs in resisting office and keeping to their principles. Sheridan turned around: 'Sir, it is easy for my Lord G. or Earl G. or Marquis B. or Lord H., with thousands upon thousands a year, some of it either *presently* derived, or *inherited* in sinecure or acquisitions from the public money, to boast of their patriotism and keep aloof from temptation; but they do not know from what temptation those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talents, and not unequal passions, and nevertheless knew not in the course of their lives what it was to have a shilling of their own.' And in saying this he wept.

"I have more than once heard him say, 'that he never had a shilling of his own.' To be sure, he contrived to extract a good many of other people's.

"In 1815, I had occasion to visit my lawyer in Chancery Lane: he was with Sheridan. After mutual greetings, etc., Sheridan retired first. Before recurring to my own business, I could not help inquiring *that* of Sheridan. 'Oh,' replied the attorney, 'the usual thing! to stave off an action from his wine merchant, my client.' 'Well,' said I, 'and what do you mean to do?' 'Nothing at all for the present,' said he; 'would you have us proceed against old Sherry? what would be the use of it?' and here he began laughing, and going over Sheridan's good gifts of conversation.

"Now, from personal experience, I can vouch that my attorney is by no means the tenderest of men, or particularly accessible to any kind of impression out of the statute or record; and yet Sheridan, in half an hour, had found the way to soften and seduce him in such a manner, that I almost think he would have thrown his client (an honest man, with all the laws, and some justice, on his side) out of the window, had he come in at the moment.

"Such was Sheridan! he could soften an attorney! There has been nothing like it since the days of Orpheus.

"One day I saw him take up his own 'Monody on Garrick.' He lighted upon the dedication to the Dowager Lady ———. On seeing it, he flew into a rage, and exclaimed, 'that it must be a forgery, that he had never dedicated anything of his to such a d——d canting,' etc., — and so went on for half an hour abusing his own dedication, or at least the object of it. If all writers were equally sincere, it would be ludicrous.

"He told me that, on the night of the grand success of his 'School for Scandal,' he was knocked down and put into the watch-house for making a row in the street, and being found intoxicated by the watchmen.

"When dying, he was requested to undergo 'an operation.' He replied that he had already submitted to *two*, which were enough for one man's

lifetime. Being asked what they were, he answered, 'having his hair cut, and sitting for his picture.'

"I have met George Colman occasionally, and thought him extremely pleasant and convivial. Sheridan's humour, or rather wit, was always saturnine, and sometimes savage; he never laughed (at least that *I* saw, and I watched him), but Colman did. If I had to *choose*, and could not have both at a time, I should say, 'Let me begin the evening with Sheridan, and finish it with Colman.' Sheridan for dinner, Colman for supper; Sheridan for claret or port, but Colman for everything, from the madeira and champagne at dinner, the claret with a *layer* of *port* between the glasses, up to the punch of the night, and down to the grog, or gin and water, of daybreak, — all these I have threaded with both the same. Sheridan was a grenadier company of life-guards, but Colman a whole regiment — of *light infantry*, to be sure, but still a regiment."

It was at this time that Lord Byron became acquainted (and, I regret to have to add, partly through my means) with Mr. Leigh Hunt, the editor of a well-known weekly journal, the *Examiner*. This gentleman I had myself formed an acquaintance with in the year 1811, and, in common with a large portion of the public, entertained a sincere admiration of his talents and courage as a journalist. The interest I took in him personally

had been recently much increased by the manly spirit which he had displayed throughout a prosecution instituted against himself and his brother, for a libel that had appeared in their paper on the prince regent, and in consequence of which they were both sentenced to imprisonment for two years. It will be recollected that there existed among the Whig party, at this period, a strong feeling of indignation at the late defection from themselves and their principles of the illustrious personage who had been so long looked up to as the friend and patron of both. Being myself, at the time, warmly — perhaps intemperately — under the influence of this feeling, I regarded the fate of Mr. Hunt with more than common interest, and, immediately on my arrival in town, paid him a visit in his prison. On mentioning the circumstance, soon after, to Lord Byron, and describing my surprise at the sort of luxurious comforts with which I had found the "wit in the dungeon" surrounded, — his trellised flower-garden without, and his books, busts, pictures, and pianoforte within, — the noble poet, whose political view of the case coincided entirely with my own, expressed a strong wish to pay a similar tribute of respect to Mr. Hunt, and accordingly, a day or two after, we proceeded for that purpose to the prison. The introduction which then took place was soon followed by a request from Mr. Hunt that we would dine with him; and the noble poet having good-naturedly accepted the

invitation, Horsemonger Lane gaol had, in the month of June, 1813, the honour of receiving Lord Byron, as a guest, within its walls.

On the morning of our first visit to the journalist, I received from Lord Byron the following lines written, it will be perceived, the night before:

"May 19, 1813.

"Oh you, who in all names can tickle the town,
Anacreon, Tom Little, Tom Moore, or Tom Brown, —
For hang me if I know of which you may most brag,
Your Quarto two-pounds, or your Twopenny Post Bag;
. . . . . .
But now to my letter — to *yours* 'tis an answer —
To-morrow be with me, as soon as you can, sir,
All ready and dressed for proceeding to spunge on
(According to compact) the wit in the dungeon —
Pray Phœbus at length our political malice
May not get us lodgings within the same palace!
I suppose that to-night you're engaged with some codgers,
And for Sotheby's Blues have deserted Sam Rogers;
And I, though with cold I have nearly my death got,
Must put on my breeches, and wait on the Heathcote.
But to-morrow at four, we will both play the *Scurra*,
And you'll be Catullus, the R—t Mamurra.

"Dear M. — Having got thus far, I am interrupted by ———. 10 o'clock.

"Half-past 11. ——— is gone. I must dress for Lady Heathcote's. — Addio."

Our day in the prison was, if not agreeable, at least novel and odd. I had, for Lord Byron's sake,

stipulated with our host beforehand, that the party should be, as much as possible, confined to ourselves; and, as far as regarded dinner, my wishes had been attended to; there being present, besides a member or two of Mr. Hunt's own family, no other stranger, that I can recollect, but Mr. Mitchell, the ingenious translator of Aristophanes. Soon after dinner, however, there dropped in some of our host's literary friends, who, being utter strangers to Lord Byron and myself, rather disturbed the ease into which we were all settling. Among these, I remember, was Mr. John Scott, — the writer, afterward, of some severe attacks on Lord Byron; and it is painful to think that, among the persons then assembled round the poet, there should have been *one* so soon to step forth the assailant of his living fame, while *another*, less manful, was to reserve the cool venom for his grave.

On the 2d of June, in presenting a petition to the House of Lords, he made his third and last appearance as an orator, in that assembly. In his way home from the House that day, he called, I remember, at my lodgings, and found me dressing in a very great hurry for dinner. He was, I recollect, in a state of most humourous exaltation after his display, and, while I hastily went on with my task in the dressing-room, continued to walk up and down the adjoining chamber, spouting forth for me, in a sort of mock heroic voice, detached sen-

tences of the speech he had just been delivering. "I told them," he said, "that it was a most flagrant violation of the Constitution — that, if such things were permitted, there was an end of English freedom, and that — " "But what was this dreadful grievance?" I asked, interrupting him in his eloquence. "The grievance?" he repeated, pausing as if to consider — "Oh, *that* I forget."[40] It is impossible, of course, to convey an idea of the dramatic humour with which he gave effect to these words; but his look and manner on such occasions were irresistibly comic; and it was, indeed, rather in such turns of fun and oddity, than in any more elaborate exhibition of wit, that the pleasantry of his conversation consisted.

Though it is evident that, after the brilliant success of "Childe Harold," he had ceased to think of Parliament as an arena of ambition, yet as a field for observation, we may take for granted it was not unstudied by him. To a mind of such quick and various views, every place and pursuit presented some aspect of interest; and whether in the ballroom, the boxing-school, or the senate, all must have been, by genius like his, turned to profit. The following are a few of the recollections and impressions which I find recorded by himself of his short parliamentary career:

"I have never heard any one who fulfilled my ideal of an orator. Grattan would have been near it, but for his harlequin delivery. Pitt I never

heard. Fox, but once, and then he struck me as a debater, which to me seems as different from an orator as an improvisatore, or a versifier, from a poet. Grey is great, but it is not oratory. Canning is sometimes very like one. Windham I did not admire, though all the world did; it seemed sad sophistry. Whitbread was the Demosthenes of bad taste and vulgar vehemence, but strong, and English. Holland is impressive from sense and sincerity. Lord Lansdowne good, but still a debater only. Grenville I like vastly, if he would prune his speeches down to an hour's delivery. Burdett is sweet and silvery as Belial himself, and I think the greatest favourite in Pandemonium; at least I always heard the country gentlemen and the ministerial devilry praise his speeches *up*-stairs, and run down from Bellamy's when he was upon his legs. I heard Bob Milnes make his *second* speech; it made no impression. I like Ward — studied, but keen, and sometimes eloquent. Peel, my school and form fellow (we sat within two of each other), strange to say, I have never heard, though I often wished to do so; but from what I remember of him at Harrow, he *is*, or *should* be, among the best of them. Now I do *not* admire Mr. Wilberforce's speaking; it is nothing but a flow of words — 'words, words, alone.'

"I doubt greatly if the English *have* any eloquence, properly so called; and am inclined to think that the Irish *had* a great deal, and that

the French *will* have, and have had in Mirabeau. Lord Chatham and Burke are the nearest approaches to orators in England. I don't know what Erskine may have been at the *bar*, but in the House I wish him at the bar once more. Lauderdale is shrill and Scotch, and acute.

"But amongst all these, good, bad, and indifferent, I never heard the speech which was not too long for the auditors, and not very intelligible, except here and there. The whole thing is a grand deception, and as tedious and tiresome as may be to those who must be often present. I heard Sheridan only once, and that briefly, but I liked his voice, his manner, and his wit: and he is the only one of them I ever wished to hear at greater length.

"The impression of Parliament upon me was, that its members are not formidable as *speakers*, but very much so as an *audience;* because in so numerous a body there may be little eloquence (after all, there were but *two* thorough orators in all antiquity, and I suspect still *fewer* in modern times), but there must be a leaven of thought and good sense sufficient to make them *know* what is right, though they can't express it nobly.

"Horne Tooke and Roscoe both are said to have declared that they left Parliament with a higher opinion of its aggregate integrity and abilities than that with which they entered it. The general amount of both in most Parliaments is probably

about the same, as also the number of *speakers* and their talent. I except *orators*, of course, because they are things of ages, and not of septennial or triennial reunions. Neither House ever struck me with more awe or respect than the same number of Turks in a divan, or of Methodists in a barn, would have done. Whatever diffidence or nervousness I felt (and I felt both, in a great degree) arose from the number rather than the quality of the assemblage, and the thought rather of the *public without* than the persons within, — knowing (as all know) that Cicero himself, and probably the Messiah, could never have altered the vote of a single lord of the bedchamber, or bishop. I thought *our* House dull, but the other animating enough upon great days.

"I have heard that when Grattan made his first speech in the English Commons, it was for some minutes doubtful whether to laugh at or cheer him. The *début* of his predecessor, Flood, had been a complete failure, under nearly similar circumstances. But when the ministerial part of our senators had watched Pitt (their thermometer) for the cue, and saw him nod repeatedly his stately nod of approbation, they took the hint from their huntsman, and broke out into the most rapturous cheers. Grattan's speech, indeed, deserved them; it was a *chef-d'œuvre*. I did not hear *that* speech of his (being then at Harrow), but heard most of his others on the same question — also that on the

war of 1815. I differed from his opinions on the latter question, but coincided in the general admiration of his eloquence.

"When I met old Courtenay, the orator, at Rogers's, the poet's, in 1811–12, I was much taken with the portly remains of his fine figure, and the still acute quickness of his conversation. It was *he* who silenced Flood in the English House by a crushing reply to a hasty *début* of the rival of Grattan in Ireland. I asked Courtenay (for I like to trace motives) if he had not some personal provocation; for the acrimony of his answer seemed to me, as I had read it, to involve it. Courtenay said 'he had; that, when in Ireland (being an Irishman), at the bar of the Irish House of Commons, Flood had made a personal and unfair attack upon *himself*, who, not being a member of that House, could not defend himself, and that some years afterward the opportunity of retort offering in the English Parliament, he could not resist it.' He certainly repaid Flood with interest, for Flood never made any figure, and only a speech or two afterward, in the English House of Commons. I must except, however, his speech on Reform in 1790, which Fox called 'the best he ever heard upon that subject.'"

For some time he had entertained thoughts of going again abroad; and it appeared, indeed, to be a sort of relief to him, whenever he felt melancholy or harassed, to turn to the freedom and solitude of

a life of travel as his resource. During the depression of spirits which he laboured under, while printing "Childe Harold," "he would frequently," says Mr. Dallas, "talk of selling Newstead, and of going to reside at Naxos, in the Grecian Archipelago, — to adopt the Eastern costume and customs, and to pass his time in studying the Oriental languages and literature." The excitement of the triumph that soon after ensued, and the success which, in other pursuits besides those of literature, attended him, again diverted his thoughts from these migratory projects. But the roving fit soon returned; and we have seen, from one of his letters to Mr. William Banks, that he looked forward to finding himself, in the course of this spring, among the mountains of his beloved Greece once more. For a time, this plan was exchanged for the more social project of accompanying his friends, the family of Lord Oxford, to Sicily; and it was while engaged in his preparatives for this expedition that the annexed letters were written.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"MAIDENHEAD, June 13, 1813.

"I have read the 'Strictures,' which are just enough, and not grossly abusive, in very fair couplets. There is a note against Massinger near the end, and one cannot quarrel with one's company, at any rate. The author detects some incongruous figures in a passage of English bards, page

23, but which edition I do not know. In the *sole* copy in your possession, I mean the *fifth* edition, you may make these alterations, that I may profit (though a little too late) by his remarks: For '*hellish* instinct,' substitute '*brutal* instinct;' '*harpies*' alter to '*felons;*' and for 'blood hounds' write 'hell-hounds.'[41] These be 'very bitter words, by my troth,' and the alterations not much sweeter; but as I shall not publish the thing, they can do no harm, but are a satisfaction to me in the way of amendment. The passage is only twelve lines.

"You do not answer me about H.'s book; I want to write to him, and not to say anything unpleasing. If you direct to post-office, Portsmouth, till *called* for, I will send and receive your letter. You never told me of the forthcoming critique on 'Columbus,' which is not *too* fair; and I do not think justice quite done to the 'Pleasures,' which surely entitle the author to a higher rank than that assigned him in the *Quarterly*. But I must not cavil at the decisions of the *invisible infallibles;* and the article is very well written. The general horror of '*fragments*' makes me tremulous for 'The Giaour;' but you would publish it,— I presume, by this time, to your repentance. But as I consented, whatever be its fate, I won't now quarrel with you, even though I detect it in my pastry; but I shall not open a pie without apprehension for some weeks.

"The books which may be marked G. O. I will carry out. Do you know Clarke's 'Naufragia?' I am told that he asserts the *first* volume of 'Robinson Crusoe' was written by the first Lord Oxford, when in the Tower, and given by him to Defoe; if true, it is a curious anecdote. Have you got back Lord Brooke's MS.? and what does Heber say of it? Write to me at Portsmouth. Ever yours, etc.

"N."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 18, 1813.

"DEAR SIR: — Will you forward the enclosed answer to the kindest letter I ever received in my life, my sense of which I can neither express to Mr. Gifford himself nor to any one else? Ever yours,

"N."

TO W. GIFFORD, ESQ.

"June 18, 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR: — I feel greatly at a loss how to write to you at all — still more to thank you as I ought. If you knew the veneration with which I have ever regarded you, long before I had the most distant prospect of becoming your acquaintance, literary or personal, my embarrassment would not surprise you.

"Any suggestion of yours, even were it conveyed in the less tender shape of the text of the 'Baviad,' or a Monk Mason note in Massinger, would have been obeyed; I should have endeavoured to improve my-

self by your censure: judge then if I should be less willing to profit by your kindness. It is not for me to bandy compliments with my elders and my betters: I receive your approbation with gratitude, and will not return my brass for your gold by expressing more fully those sentiments of admiration, which, however sincere, would, I know, be unwelcome.

"To your advice on religious topics, I shall equally attend. Perhaps the best way will be by avoiding them altogether. The already published objectionable passages have been much commented upon, but certainly have been rather strongly interpreted. I am no bigot to infidelity, and did not expect that, because I doubted the immortality of man, I should be charged with denying the existence of a God. It was the comparative insignificance of ourselves and *our world*, when placed in comparison with the mighty whole, of which it is an atom, that first led me to imagine that our pretensions to eternity might be overrated.

"This, and being early disgusted with a Calvinistic Scotch school, where I was cudgelled to church for the first ten years of my life, afflicted me with this malady; for, after all, it is, I believe, a disease of the mind as much as other kinds of hypochondria." [42]

TO MR. MOORE.

"June 22, 1813.

"Yesterday I dined in company with '———, the Epicene,' whose politics are sadly changed.

She is for the Lord of Israel and the Lord of Liverpool, — a vile antithesis of a Methodist and a Tory, — talks of nothing but devotion and the ministry, and, I presume, expects that God and the government will help her to a pension.

"Murray, the αναξ of publishers, the Anac of stationers, has a design upon you in the paper line. He wants you to become the staple and stipendiary editor of a periodical work. What say you? Will you be bound, like 'Kit Smart, to write for ninety-nine years in the *Universal Visitor?*' Seriously, he talks of hundreds a year, and — though I hate prating of the beggarly elements — his proposal may be to your honour and profit, and, I am very sure, will be to our pleasure.

"I don't know what to say about 'friendship.' I never was in friendship but once, in my nineteenth year, and then it gave me as much trouble as love. I am afraid, as Whitbread's sire said to the king, when he wanted to knight him, that I am 'too old:' but, nevertheless, no one wishes you more friends, fame, and felicity, than Yours," etc.

Having relinquished his design of accompanying the Oxfords to Sicily, he again thought of the East, as will be seen by the following letters, and proceeded so far in his preparations for the voyage as to purchase of Love, the jeweller, of Old Bond Street, about a dozen snuff-boxes, as presents for some of his old Turkish acquaintances.

TO MR. MOORE.

"4 Benedictine Street, St. James's,
"July 8, 1813.

"I presume by your silence that I have blundered into something noxious in my reply to your letter, for the which I beg leave to send beforehand a sweeping apology, which you may apply to any, or all, parts of that unfortunate epistle. If I err in my conjecture, I expect the like from you, in putting our correspondence so long in quarantine. God he knows what I have said; but he also knows (if he is not as indifferent to mortals as the *nonchalant* deities of Lucretius) that you are the last person I want to offend. So, if I have, — why the devil don't you say it at once, and expectorate your spleen?

"Rogers is out of town with Madame de Staël, who hath published an 'Essay against Suicide,' which, I presume, will make somebody shoot himself; as a sermon by Blinkensop, in *proof* of Christianity, sent a hitherto most orthodox acquaintance of mine out of a chapel of ease a perfect atheist. Have you found or founded a residence yet? and have you begun or finished a poem? If you won't tell me what *I* have done, pray say what you have done, or left undone, yourself. I am still in equipment for voyaging, and anxious to hear from, or of, you *before* I go, which anxiety you should remove more readily, as you think I sha'n't cogitate about you afterward.

I shall give the lie to that calumny by fifty foreign letters, particularly from any place where the plague is rife, — without a drop of vinegar or a whiff of sulphur to save you from infection.

"The Oxfords have sailed almost a fortnight, and my sister is in town, which is a great comfort, — for never having been much together, we are naturally more attached to each other. I presume the illuminations have conflagrated to Derby (or wherever you are) by this time. We are just recovering from tumult and train oil, and transparent fripperies, and all the noise and nonsense of victory. Drury Lane had a large *M. W.*, which some thought was Marshal Wellington; others, that it might be translated into Manager Whitbread; while the ladies of the vicinity of the saloon conceived the last letter to be complimentary to themselves. I leave this to the commentators to illustrate. If you don't answer this, I sha'n't say what *you* deserve, but I think *I* deserve a reply. Do you conceive there is no Post-Bag but the Twopenny? Sunburn me, if you are not too bad."

TO MR. MOORE.

"July 13, 1813.

"Your letter set me at ease; for I really thought (as I hear of your susceptibility) that I had said — I know not what — but something I should have been very sorry for, had it, or I, offended you; though I don't see how a man with a beautiful wife

— *his own* children — quiet — fame — competency and friends (I will vouch for a thousand, which is more than I will for a unit in my own behalf), can be offended with anything.

"Do you know, Moore, I am amazingly inclined — remember I say but *inclined* — to be seriously enamoured with Lady A. F. — but this . . . has ruined all my prospects. However, you know her; is she *clever*, or sensible, or good-tempered? either *would* do — I scratch out the *will*. I don't ask as to her beauty — that I see; but my circumstances are mending, and were not my other prospects blackening, I would take a wife, and that should be the woman, had I the chance. I do not yet know her much, but better than I did.

"I want to get away, but find difficulty in compassing a passage in a ship of war. They had better let me go; if I cannot, patriotism is the word — 'nay, an' they'll mouth, I'll rant as well as they.' Now, what are you doing? — writing we all hope, for our own sakes. Remember you must edit my posthumous works, with a Life of the Author, for which I will send you Confessions, dated, 'Lazaretto,' Smyrna, Malta, or Palermo — one can die anywhere.

"There is to be a thing on Tuesday ycleped a national fête. The regent and ——— are to be there, and everybody else, who has shillings enough for what was once a guinea. Vauxhall is the scene — there are six tickets issued for the modest

women, and it is supposed there will be three to spare. The passports for the lax are beyond my arithmetic.

"P. S. The Staël last night attacked me most furiously — said that I had 'no right to make love — that I had used ——— barbarously — that I had no feeling, and was totally *in*sensible to *la belle passion*, and *had* been all my life.' I am very glad to hear it, but did not know it before. Let me hear from you anon."

TO MR. MOORE.

"July 25, 1813.

"I am not well versed enough in the ways of single woman to make much matrimonial progress.

"I have been dining like the dragon of Wantley for this last week. My head aches with the vintage of various cellars, and my brains are muddled as their dregs. I met your friends the D——s: she sung one of your best songs so well, that, but for the appearance of affectation, I could have cried; he reminds me of Hunt, but handsomer, and more musical in soul, perhaps. I wish to God he may conquer his horrible anomalous complaint. The upper part of her face is beautiful, and she seems much attached to her husband. He is right, nevertheless, in leaving this nauseous town. The first winter would infallibly destroy her complexion, — and the second, very probably, everything else.

"I must tell you a story. M—— (of indifferent memory) was dining out the other day, and complaining of the p——e's coldness to his old wassailers. D—— (a learned Jew) bored him with questions, — why this? and why that? 'Why did the p——e act thus?' 'Why, sir, on account of Lord ———, who ought to be ashamed of himself.' 'And why ought Lord ——— to be ashamed of himself?' 'Because the p——e, sir, . . . 'And why, sir, did the p——e cut *you?*' 'Because, G—d d—mme, sir, I stuck to my principles.' 'And *why* did you stick to your principles?'

"Is not this last question the best that was ever put, when you consider to whom? It nearly killed M——. Perhaps you may think it stupid, but, as Goldsmith said about the peas, it was a very good joke when I heard it — as I did from an ear-witness — and is only spoilt in my narration.

"The season has closed with a dandy ball; but I have dinners with the Harrowbys, Rogers, and Frere and Mackintosh, where I shall drink your health in a silent bumper, and regret your absence till 'too much canaries' wash away my memory, or render it superfluous by a vision of you at the opposite side of the table. Canning has disbanded his party by a speech from his . . . , the true throne of a Tory. Conceive his turning them off in a formal harangue, and bidding them think for themselves. 'I have led my ragamuffins where they are well peppered. There are but three of the 150 left

alive, and they are for the *Towns-end'* (*query*, might not Falstaff mean the Bow Street officer? I dare say Malone's posthumous edition will have it so) 'for life.'

"Since I wrote last, I have been into the country. I journeyed by night — no incident, or accident, but an alarm on the part of my valet on the outside, who, in crossing Epping Forest, actually, I believe, flung down his purse before a mile-stone, with a glowworm in the second figure of number XIX. — mistaking it for a footpad and dark lantern. I can only attribute his fears to a pair of new pistols wherewith I had armed him; and he thought it necessary to display his vigilance by calling out to me whenever we passed anything, — no matter whether moving or stationary. Conceive ten miles, with a tremor every furlong. I have scribbled you a fearfully long letter. This sheet must be blank, and is merely a wrapper, to preclude the tabellarians of the post from peeping. You once complained of my *not* writing; I will 'heap coals of fire upon your head' by *not* complaining of your *not* reading. Ever, my dear Moore, your'n (isn't that the Staffordshire termination?)

"Byron."

TO MR. MOORE.

"July 27, 1813.

"When you next imitate the style of 'Tacitus,' pray add, 'de moribus Germanorum;' — this last

was a piece of barbarous silence, and could only be taken from the *Woods*, and, as such, I attribute it entirely to your sylvan sequestration at Mayfield Cottage. You will find, on casting up accounts, that you are my debtor by several sheets and one epistle. I shall bring my action; if you don't discharge, expect to hear from my attorney. I have forwarded your letter to Ruggiero; but don't make a postman of me again, for fear I should be tempted to violate your sanctity of wax or wafer.

"Believe me, ever yours *indignantly*,

"Bn."

TO MR. MOORE.

"July 28, 1813.

"Can't you be satisfied with the pangs of my jealousy of Rogers, without actually making me the pander of your epistolary intrigue? This is the second letter you have enclosed to my address, notwithstanding a miraculous long answer, and a subsequent short one or two of your own. If you do so again, I can't tell to what pitch my fury may soar. I shall send you verse or arsenic, as likely as anything, — four thousand couplets on sheets beyond the privilege of franking; that privilege, sir, of which you take an undue advantage over a too susceptible senator, by forwarding your lucubrations to every one but himself. I won't frank *from* you, or *for* you, or *to* you — may I be curst if I do, unless you mend your manners. I disown you —

I disclaim you — and by all the powers of eulogy, I will write a panegyric upon you — or dedicate a quarto — if you don't make me ample amends.

"P. S. I am in training to dine with Sheridan and Rogers this evening. I have a little spite against R., and will shed his 'Clary wines pottle-deep.' This is nearly my ultimate or penultimate letter; for I am quite equipped, and only wait a passage. Perhaps I may wait a few weeks for Sligo, but not if I can help it."

He had, with the intention of going to Greece, applied to Mr. Croker, the secretary of the admiralty, to procure him a passage on board a king's ship to the Mediterranean; and, at the request of this gentleman, Captain Carlton, of the *Boyne*, who was just then ordered to reinforce Sir Edward Pellew, consented to receive Lord Byron into his cabin for the voyage. To the letter announcing this offer, the following is the reply:

TO MR. CROKER.

"Bt. Str., August 2, 1813.

"Dear Sir: — I was honoured with your unexpected[43] and very obliging letter, when on the point of leaving London, which prevented me from acknowledging my obligation as quickly as I felt it sincerely. I am endeavouring in all my power to be ready before Saturday — and even if I should

not succeed, I can only blame my own tardiness, which will not the less enhance the benefit I have lost. I have only to add my hope of forgiveness for all my trespasses on your time and patience, and with my best wishes for your public and private welfare, I have the honour to be, most truly, your obliged and most obedient servant,

"Byron."

So early as the autumn of this year, a fifth edition of "The Giaour" was required; and again his fancy teemed with fresh materials for its pages. The verses commencing "The browsing camels' bells are tinkling," and the four pages that follow the line, "Yes, love indeed is light from heaven," were all added at this time. Nor had the overflowings of his mind even yet ceased, as I find in the poem, as it exists at present, still further additions, — and, among them, those four brilliant lines:

"She was a form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight,
And rose, where'er I turned mine eye,
The Morning-star of memory!"

The following notes and letters to Mr. Murray, during these outpourings, will show how irresistible was the impulse under which he vented his thoughts.

"If you send more proofs, I shall never finish this infernal story — 'Ecce signum' — thirty-three

more lines enclosed! to the utter discomfiture of the printer, and, I fear, not to your advantage.

"B."

"Half-past two in the morning, Aug. 10, 1813.

"DEAR SIR:—Pray suspend the *proofs*, for I am *bitten* again, and have *quantities* for other parts of the bravura.

"Yours ever, B.

"P. S. You shall have them in the course of the day."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 26, 1813.

"I have looked over and corrected one proof, but not so carefully (God knows if you can read it through, but I can't) as to preclude your eye from discovering some *o*mission of mine or *com*mission of your printer. If you have patience, look it over. Do you know anybody who can stop — I mean *point* — commas, and so forth? for I am, I hear, a sad hand at your punctuation. I have, but with some difficulty, *not* added any more to this snake of a poem, which has been lengthening its rattles every month. It is now fearfully long, being more than a canto and a half of 'Childe Harold,' which contains but 882 lines per book, with all late additions inclusive.

"The last lines Hodgson likes. It is not often he does, and when he don't he tells me with great

energy, and I fret and alter. I have thrown them in to soften the ferocity of our infidel, and, for a dying man, have given him a good deal to say for himself.

"I was quite sorry to hear you say you stayed in town on my account, and I hope sincerely you did not mean so superfluous a piece of politeness.

"Our *six* critiques! They would have made half a *Quarterly* by themselves; but this is the age of criticism."

The following refer apparently to a still later edition.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"STILTON, October 3, 1813.

"I have just recollected an alteration you may make in the proof to be sent to Aston. Among the lines on Hassan's Serai, not far from the beginning, is this:

"Unmeet for Solitude to share.

Now to share implies more than *one*, and Solitude is a single gentleman; it must be thus:

"For many a gilded chamber's there,
Which Solitude might well forbear;

and so on. My address is Aston Hall, Rotherham.

"Will you adopt this correction? and pray accept a Stilton cheese from me for your trouble. Ever yours, B.

"If [44] the old line stands, let the other run thus:

"Nor there will weary traveller halt,
To bless the sacred bread and salt.

"*Note.* To partake of food — to break bread and taste salt with your host, ensures the safety of the guest; even though an enemy, his person from that moment becomes sacred.

"There is another additional note sent yesterday — on the priest in the confessional.

"P. S. I leave this to your discretion; if anybody thinks the old line a good one or the cheese a bad one, don't accept either. But, in that case, the word *share* is repeated soon after in the line:

"To share the master's bread and salt;

and must be altered to:

"To break the master's bread and salt.

This is not so well, though, — confound it!"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"October 12, 1813.

"You must look 'The Giaour' again over carefully; there are a few lapses, particularly in the last page. 'I *know* 'twas false; she could not die;' it was, and ought to be — 'I *knew*.' Pray observe this and similar mistakes.

"I have received and read the *British Review*. I really think the writer in most points very right. The only mortifying thing is the accusation of imitation. *Crabbe's* passage I never saw;[45] and Scott I no further meant to follow than in his *lyric* measure, which is Gray's, Milton's, and any one's who likes it. The Giaour is certainly a bad character, but not dangerous; and I think his fate and his feelings will meet with few proselytes. I shall be very glad to hear from or of you, when you please; but don't put yourself out of your way on my account."

TO MR. MOORE.

"Bennet Street, August 22, 1813.

"As our late — I might say, deceased — correspondence had too much of the town-life leaven in it, we will now, 'paulo majora,' prattle a little of literature in all its branches; and first of the first, — criticism. The prince is at Brighton, and Jackson, the boxer, gone to Margate, having, I believe, decoyed Yarmouth to see a milling in that polite neighbourhood. Mad^e^ de Staël Holstein has lost one of her young barons, who has been carbonadoed by a vile Teutonic adjutant, — kilt and killed in a coffee-house at Scrawsenhawsen. Corinne is, of course, what all mothers must be, — but will, I venture to prophesy, do what few mothers could, — write an essay upon it. She cannot exist without a grievance — and somebody to see, or read, how

much grief becomes her. I have not seen her since the event; but merely judge (not very charitably) from prior observation

"In a 'mail-coach copy' of the *Edinburgh*, I perceive 'The Giaour' is second article. The numbers are still in the Leith smack — *pray, which way is the wind?* The said article is so very mild and sentimental, that it must be written by Jeffrey *in love*, — you know he is gone to America to marry some fair one, of whom he has been, for several *quarters*, *éperdument amoureux.* Seriously, — as Winifred Jenkins says of Lismahago, — Mr. Jeffrey (or his deputy) 'has done the handsome thing by me,' and I say *nothing.* But this I will say, if you and I had knocked one another on the head in this quarrel, how he would have laughed, and what a mighty bad figure we should have cut in our posthumous works. By the by, I was called *in* the other day to mediate between two gentlemen bent upon carnage, and — after a long struggle between the natural desire of destroying one's fellow creatures, and the dislike of seeing men play the fool for nothing — I got one to make an apology, and the other to take it, and left them to live happy ever after. One was a peer, the other a friend untitled, and both fond of high play, — and one, I can swear for, though very mild, 'not fearful,' and so dead a shot, that, though the other is the thinnest of men, he would have split him like a cane. They both conducted themselves

very well, and I put them out of *pain* as soon as I could.

"There is an American Life of G. F. Cooke, *Scurra* deceased, lately published. Such a book! — I believe, since Drunken Barnaby's Journal, nothing like it has drenched the press. All green-room and tap-room — drams and the drama — brandy, whiskey-punch, and, *latterly*, toddy, overflow every page. Two things are rather marvellous, — first, that a man should live so long drunk, and, next, that he should have found a sober biographer. There are some very laughable things in it, nevertheless; but the pints he swallowed, and the parts he performed, are too regularly registered.

"All this time you wonder I am not gone; so do I; but the accounts of the plague are very perplexing — not so much for the thing itself as the quarantine established in all ports, and from all places, even from England. It is true, the forty or sixty days would, in all probability, be as foolishly spent on shore as in the ship; but one likes to have one's choice, nevertheless. Town is awfully empty; but not the worse for that. I am really puzzled with my perfect ignorance of what I mean to do; not stay, if I can help it, but where to go?[46] Sligo is for the North; a pleasant place, Petersburg, in September, with one's ears and nose in a muff, or else tumbling into one's neckcloth or pocket-handkerchief! If the winter treated Buonaparte with

so little ceremony, what would it inflict upon your solitary traveller? Give me a *sun*, I care not how hot, and sherbet, I care not how cool, and *my* heaven is as easily made as your Persian's.[47] 'The Giaour' is now a thousand and odd lines. 'Lord Fanny spins a thousand such a day,' eh, Moore? — thou wilt needs be a wag, but I forgive it. Yours ever, BN.

"P. S. I perceive I have written a flippant and rather cold-hearted letter! let it go, however. I have said nothing, either, of the brilliant sex; but the fact is I am at this moment in a far more serious, and entirely new, scrape than any of the last twelve months, — and that is saying a good deal. It is unlucky we can neither live with nor without these women.

"I am now thinking of regretting that, just as I have left Newstead, you reside near it. Did you ever see it? *Do* — but don't tell me that you like it. If I had known of such intellectual neighbourhood, I don't think I should have quitted it. You could have come over so often, as a bachelor, — for it was a thorough bachelor's mansion — plenty of wine and such sordid sensualities — with books enough, room enough, and an air of antiquity about all (except the lasses) that would have suited you, when pensive, and served you to laugh at when in glee. I had built myself a bath and a *vault* — and now I sha'n't even be buried in it. It is

odd that we can't even be certain of a *grave*, at least a particular one. I remember, when about fifteen, reading your poems there, which I can repeat almost now, — and asking all kinds of questions about the author, when I heard that he was not dead according to the preface; wondering if I should ever see him — and though, at that time, without the smallest poetical propensity myself, very much taken, as you may imagine, with that volume. Adieu — I commit you to the care of the gods — Hindoo, Scandinavian, and Hellenic!

"P. S. 2d. There is an excellent review of Grimm's Correspondence and Mad^e de Staël in this N° of the *E. R.* Jeffrey, himself, was my critic last year; but this is, I believe, by another hand. I hope you are going on with your *grand coup* — pray do — or that damned Lucien Buonaparte will beat us all. I have seen much of his poem in MS., and he really surpasses everything beneath Tasso. Hodgson is translating him *against* another bard. You and (I believe, Rogers) Scott, Gifford and myself, are to be referred to as judges between the twain, — that is, if you accept the office. Conceive our different opinions! I think, we, most of us (I am talking very impudently, you will think — *us*, indeed!) have a way of our own, — at least, you and Scott certainly have."

TO MR. MOORE.

"August 28, 1813.

"Ay, my dear Moore, 'there *was* a time' — I have heard of your tricks, when 'you was campaigning at the King of Bohemy.' I am much mistaken if, some fine London spring, about the year 1815, that time does not come again. After all, we must end in marriage; and I can conceive nothing more delightful than such a state in the country, reading the county newspaper, etc., and kissing one's wife's maid. Seriously, I would incorporate with any woman of decent demeanour to-morrow — that is, I would a month ago, but, at present . . .

"Why don't you 'parody that Ode?'[48] — Do you think I should be *tetchy?* or have you done it, and won't tell me? — You are quite right about Giamschid, and I have reduced it to a dissyllable within this half hour.[49] I am glad to hear you talk of Richardson, because it tells me what you won't, — that you are going to beat Lucien. At least tell me how far you have proceeded. Do you think me less interested about your works, or less sincere than our friend Ruggiero? I am not — and never was. In that thing of mine, the 'English Bards,' at the time when I was angry with all the world, I never 'disparaged your parts,' although I did not know you personally; and have always regretted that you don't give us an *entire* work, and not

sprinkle yourself in detached pieces — beautiful, I allow, and quite *alone* in our language,[50] but still giving us a right to expect a *Shah Nameh* (is that the name?) as well as gazels. Stick to the East, — the oracle, Staël, told me it was the only poetical policy. The North, South, and West, have all been exhausted; but from the East, we have nothing but S——'s unsaleables, — and these he has contrived to spoil, by adopting only their most outrageous fictions. His personages don't interest us, and yours will. You will have no competitor; and, if you had, you ought to be glad of it. The little I have done in that way is merely a 'voice in the wilderness' for you; and if it has had any success, that also will prove that the public are Orientalising, and pave the path for you.

"I have been thinking of a story, grafted on the amours of a Peri and a mortal — something like, only more *philanthropical* than, Cazotte's 'Diable Amoureux.' It would require a good deal of poesy, and tenderness is not my forte. For that, and other reasons, I have given up the idea, and merely suggest it to you, because, in intervals of your greater work, I think it a subject you might make much of.[51] If you want any more books, there is Castellan's 'Mœurs des Ottomans,' the best compendium of the kind I ever met with, in six small tomes. I am really taking a liberty by talking in this style to my 'elders and my betters;' pardon it, and don't *Rochefoucault* my motives."

TO MR. MOORE.

"August — September, I mean — 1, 1813.

"I send you, begging your acceptance, Castellan, and three vols. on Turkish literature, not yet looked into. The *last* I will thank you to read, extract what you want, and return in a week, as they are lent to me by that brightest of Northern constellations, Mackintosh, — amongst many other kind things into which India has warmed him, for I am sure your *home* Scotsman is of a less genial description.

"Your Peri, my dear M., is sacred and inviolable; I have no idea of touching the hem of her petticoat. Your affectation of a dislike to encounter me is so flattering, that I begin to think myself a very fine fellow. But you are laughing at me — 'Stap my vitals, Tam! thou art a very impudent person;' and, if you are not laughing at me, you deserve to be laughed at. Seriously, what on earth can you, or have you, to dread from any poetical flesh breathing? It really puts me out of humour to hear you talk thus.

"'The Giaour' I have added to a good deal; but still in foolish fragments. It contains about twelve hundred lines, or rather more — now printing. You will allow me to send you a copy. You delight me much by telling me that I am in your good graces, and more particularly as to temper; for, unluckily, I have the reputation of a very bad

one. But they say the devil is amusing when pleased, and I must have been more venomous than the old serpent, to have hissed or stung in your company. It may be, and would appear to a third person, an incredible thing, but I know *you* will believe me when I say, that I am as anxious for your success as one human being can be for another's, — as much as if I had never scribbled a line. Surely the field of fame is wide enough for all; and if it were not, I would not willingly rob my neighbour of a rood of it. Now you have a pretty property of some thousand acres there, and when you have passed your present Inclosure Bill, your income will be doubled (there's a metaphor, worthy of a Templar, namely, pert and low), while my wild common is too remote to incommode you, and quite incapable of such fertility. I send you (which return per post, as the printer would say) a curious letter from a friend of mine,[52] which will let you into the origin of 'The Giaour.' Write soon. Ever, dear Moore, yours most entirely, etc.

"P. S. This letter was written to me on account of a *different story* circulated by some gentlewomen of our acquaintance, a little too close to the text. The part erased contained merely some Turkish names, and circumstantial evidence of the girl's detection, not very important or decorous."

TO MR. MOORE.

"Sept. 5, 1813.

"You need not tie yourself down to a day with Toderini, but send him at your leisure, having anatomised him into such annotations as you want; I do not believe that he has ever undergone that process before, which is the best reason for not sparing him now.

"——— has returned to town, but not yet recovered of the *Quarterly*. What fellows these reviewers are! 'these bugs do fear us all.' They made you fight, and me (the milkiest of men) a satirist, and will end by making ——— madder than Ajax. I have been reading 'Memory' again, the other day, and 'Hope' altogether, and retain all my preference of the former. His elegance is really wonderful — there is no such thing as a vulgar line in his book.

"What say you to Buonaparte? Remember, I back him against the field, barring catalepsy and the elements. Nay, I almost wish him success against all countries but this, — were it only to choke the *Morning Post*, and his undutiful father-in-law, with that rebellious bastard of Scandinavian adoption, Bernadotte. Rogers wants me to go with him on a crusade to the Lakes, and to besiege you on our way. This last is a great temptation, but I fear it will not be in my power, unless you would go on with one of us somewhere — no matter where. It is too late for Matlock, but we

might hit upon some scheme, high life or low, — the last would be much the best for amusement. I am so sick of the other, that I quite sigh for a cider-cellar, or a cruise in a smuggler's sloop.

"You cannot wish more than I do that the Fates were a little more accommodating to our parallel lines, which prolong ad infinitum without coming a jot nearer. I almost wish I were married, too — which is saying much. All my friends, seniors and juniors, are in for it, and ask me to be godfather, — the only species of parentage which, I believe, will ever come to my share in a lawful way; and, in an unlawful one, by the blessing of Lucina, we can never be certain, — though the parish may. I suppose I shall hear from you to-morrow. If not, this goes as it is; but I leave room for a P. S., in case anything requires an answer. Ever, etc.

"No letter — *n'importe*. R. thinks the *Quarterly* will be at *me* this time: if so, it shall be a war of extermination — no *quarter*. From the youngest devil down to the oldest woman of that review, all shall perish by one fatal lampoon. The ties of nature shall be torn asunder, for I will not even spare my bookseller; nay, if one were to include readers also, all the better."

TO MR. MOORE.

"September 8, 1813.

"I am sorry to see Tod. again so soon, for fear your scrupulous conscience should have prevented

you from fully availing yourself of his spoils. By this coach I send you a copy of that awful pamphlet 'The Giaour,' which has never procured me half so high a compliment as your modest alarm. You will (if inclined in an evening) perceive that I have added much in quantity, — a circumstance which may truly diminish your modesty upon the subject.

"You stand certainly in great need of a 'lift' with Mackintosh. My dear Moore, you strangely underrate yourself. I should conceive it an affectation in any other; but I think I know you well enough to believe that you don't know your own value. However, 'tis a fault that generally mends; and, in your case, it really ought. I have heard him speak of you as highly as your wife could wish; and enough to give all your friends the jaundice.

"Yesterday I had a letter from *Ali Pacha!* brought by Doctor Holland, who is just returned from Albania. It is in Latin, and begins 'Excellentissime *nec non* Carissime,' and ends about a gun he wants made for him; it is signed 'Ali Vizir.' What do you think he has been about? H. tells me that, last spring, he took a hostile town, where, forty-two years ago, his mother and sisters were treated as Miss Cunigunde was by the Bulgarian cavalry. He takes the town, selects all the survivors of this exploit, — children, grandchildren, etc., to the tune of six hundred, — and has

them shot before his face. Recollect, he spared the rest of the city, and confined himself to the Tarquin pedigree, — which is more than I would. So much for 'dearest friend.'"

TO MR. MOORE.

"September 9, 1813.

"I write to you from Mr. Murray's, and I may say, from Murray, who, if you are not prediposed in favour of any other publisher, would be happy to treat with you, at a fitting time, for your work. I can safely recommend him as fair, liberal, and attentive, and certainly, in point of reputation, he stands among the first of 'the trade.' I am sure he would do you justice. I have written to you so much lately, that you will be glad to see so little now.

Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"September 27, 1813.

"THOMAS MOORE: — (Thou wilt never be called '*true* Thomas,' like he of Ercildoune) why don't you write to me? — as you won't, I must. I was near you at Aston the other day, and hope I soon shall be again. If so, you must and shall meet me, and go to Matlock and elsewhere, and take what, in *flash* dialect, is poetically termed 'a lark,' with Rogers and me for accomplices. Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey — the best looking bard I have seen for some time.

To have that poet's head and shoulders, I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing person to look on, and a man of talent, and all that, and — *there* is his eulogy.

"——— read me *part* of a letter from you. By the foot of Pharaoh, I believe there was abuse, for he stopped short, so he did, after a fine saying about our correspondence, and *looked* — I wish I could revenge myself by attacking you, or by telling you that I have *had* to defend you — an agreeable way which one's friends have of recommending themselves by saying, 'Ay, ay, *I* gave it Mr. Such-a-one for what he said about your being a plagiary, and a rake, and so on.' But do you know that you are one of the very few whom I never have the satisfaction of hearing abused, but the reverse, — and do you suppose I will forgive *that?*

"I have been in the country, and ran away from the Doncaster races. It is odd, I was a visitor in the same house which came to my sire as a residence with Lady Carmarthen (with whom he adulterated before his majority — by the by, remember, *she* was not my mamma), and they thrust me into an old room, with a nauseous picture over the chimney, which I should suppose my papa regarded with due respect, and which, inheriting the family taste, I looked upon with great satisfaction. I stayed a week with the family, and behaved very well — though the lady of the house is young, and religious, and pretty, and the master

is my particular friend. I felt no wish for anything but a poodle dog, which they kindly gave me. Now, for a man of my courses not even to have *coveted*, is a sign of great amendment. Pray pardon all this nonsense, and don't 'snub me when I'm in spirits.' Ever, yours,

"Bn.

"Here's an impromptu for you by a 'person of quality,' written last week, on being reproached for low spirits.

"When from the heart where Sorrow sits,[58]
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye:
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink;
My Thoughts their dungeon know too well —
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And bleed within their silent cell."

TO MR. MOORE.

"October 2, 1813.

"You have not answered some six letters of mine. This, therefore, is my penultimate. I will write to you once more, but, after that, — I swear by all the saints, — I am silent and supercilious. I have met Curran at Holland House — he beats everybody; his imagination is beyond human, and his humour (it is difficult to define what is wit) perfect. Then he has fifty faces, and twice as many voices, when he mimics — I never met his equal.

Now, were I a woman, and eke a virgin, that is the man I should make my Scamander. He is quite fascinating. Remember, I have met him but once; and you, who have known him long, may probably deduct from my panegyric. I almost fear to meet him again, lest the impression should be lowered. He talked a great deal about you, — a theme never tiresome to me, nor anybody else that I know. What a variety of expression he conjures into that naturally not very fine countenance of his! He absolutely changes it entirely. I have done — for I can't describe him, and you know him. On Sunday I return to ———, where I shall not be far from you. Perhaps I shall hear from you in the meantime. Good night.

"Saturday morn. Your letter has cancelled all my anxieties. I did *not suspect* you in *earnest*. Modest again! Because I don't do a very shabby thing, it seems, I 'don't fear your competition.' If it were reduced to an alternative of preference, I *should* dread you, as much as Satan does Michael. But is there not room enough in our respective regions? Go on — it will soon be my turn to forgive. To-day I dine with Mackintosh and Mrs. *Stale*, — as John Bull may be pleased to denominate Corinne, — whom I saw last night, at Covent Garden, yawning over the humour of Falstaff.

"The reputation of 'gloom,' if one's friends are not included in the *reputants*, is of great service; as it saves one from a legion of impertinents, in

the shape of commonplace acquaintance. But thou know'st I can be a right merry and conceited fellow, and rarely 'larmoyant.' Murray shall reinstate your line forthwith.[54] I believe the blunder in the motto was mine; and yet I have, in general, a memory for *you*, and am sure it was rightly printed at first.

"I do 'blush' very often, if I may believe Ladies H. and M., — but luckily, at present, no one see me. Adieu."

TO MR. MOORE.

"November 30, 1813.

"Since I last wrote to you, much has occurred, good, bad, and indifferent, — not to make me forget you, but to prevent me from reminding you of one who, nevertheless, has often thought of you, and to whom *your* thoughts, in many a measure, have frequently been a consolation. We were once very near neighbours this autumn; and a good and bad neighbourhood it has proved to me. Suffice it to say, that your French quotation was confoundedly to the purpose, — though very *unexpectedly* pertinent, as you may imagine by what I *said* before, and my silence since. However, 'Richard's himself again,' and except all night and some part of the morning, I don't think very much about the matter.

"All convulsions end with me in rhyme; and to solace my midnights, I have scribbled another

Turkish story,[55] — not a Fragment, — which you will receive soon after this. It does not trench upon your kingdom in the least, and if it did, you would soon reduce me to my proper boundaries. You will think, and justly, that I run some risk of losing the little I have gained in fame, by this further experiment on public patience; but I have really ceased to care on that head. I have written this, and published it, for the sake of the *employment*, — to wring my thoughts from reality, and take refuge in 'imaginings,' however 'horrible;' and, as to success! those who succeed will console me for a failure — excepting yourself and one or two more, whom luckily I love too well to wish one leaf of their laurels a tint yellower. This is the work of a week, and will be the reading of an hour to you, or even less, — and so, let it go . . .

"P. S. Ward and I *talk* of going to Holland. I want to see how a Dutch canal looks after the Bosphorus. Pray respond."

TO MR. MOORE.

"December 8, 1813.

"Your letter, like all the best, and even kindest things in this world, is both painful and pleasing. But, first, to what sits nearest. Do you know I was actually about to dedicate to you, — not in a

formal inscription, as to one's *elders*, but through a short prefatory letter, in which I boasted myself your intimate, and held forth the prospect of *your* poem; when, lo! the recollection of your strict injunctions of secrecy as to the said poem, more than *once* repeated by word and letter, flashed upon me, and marred my intents. I could have no motive for repressing my own desire of alluding to you (and not a day passes that I do not think and talk of you), but an idea that you might, yourself, dislike it. You cannot doubt my sincere admiration, waiving personal friendship for the present, which, by the by, is not less sincere and deep rooted. I have you by rote and by heart; of which '*ecce signum!*' When I was at ———, on my first visit, I have a habit, in passing my time a good deal alone, of — I won't call it singing, for that I never attempt except to myself — but of uttering, to what I think tunes, your 'Oh, breathe not,' 'When the last glimpse,' and 'When he who adores thee,' with others of the same minstrel; they are my matins and vespers. I assuredly did not intend them to be overheard, but one morning, in comes, not La Donna, but Il Marito, with a very grave face, saying, 'Byron, I must request you won't sing any more, at least of *those* songs.' I stared, and said, 'Certainly, but why?' — 'To tell you the truth,' quoth he, 'they make my wife *cry*, and so melancholy, that I wish her to hear no more of them.'

"Now, my dear M., the effect must have been from your words, and certainly not my music. I merely mention this foolish story to show you how much I am indebted to you for even your pastimes. A man may praise and praise, but no one recollects but that which pleases — at least, in composition. Though I think no one equal to you in that department, or in satire, — and surely no one was ever so popular in both, — I certainly am of opinion that you have not yet done all *you* can do, though more than enough for any one else. I want, and the world expects, a longer work from you; and I see in you what I never saw in poet before, a strange diffidence of your own powers, which I cannot account for, and which must be unaccountable, when a *Cossac* like me can appal a *cuirassier*. Your story I did not, could not know, — I thought only of a Peri. I wish you had confided in me, not for your sake, but mine, and to prevent the world from losing a much better poem than my own, but which, I yet hope, this *clashing* will not even now deprive them of.[56] Mine is the work of a week, written, *why* I have partly told you, and partly I cannot tell you by letter — some day I will.

"Go on — I shall really be very unhappy if I at all interfere with you. The success of mine is yet problematical; though the public will probably purchase a certain quantity, on the presumption of their own propensity for 'The Giaour' and such 'horrid mysteries.' The only advantage I have is

being on the spot; and that merely amounts to saving me the trouble of turning over books which I had better read again. If *your chamber* was furnished in the same way, you have no need to *go there* to describe — I mean only as to *accuracy* — because I drew it from recollection.

"This last thing of mine *may* have the same fate, and I assure you I have great doubts about it. But, even if not, its little day will be over before you are ready and willing. Come out — 'screw your courage to the sticking-place.' Except the Post-Bag (and surely you cannot complain of a want of success there), you have not been *regularly* out for some years. No man stands higher, — whatever you may think on a rainy day, in your provincial retreat. 'Aucun homme, dans aucune langue, n'a été, peut-être, plus complètement le poète du cœur et le poète des femmes. Les critiques lui reprochent de n'avoir représenté le monde ni tel qu'il est, ni tel qu'il doit être; *mais les femmes répondent qu'il l'a représenté tel qu'elles le désirent.*' I should have thought Sismondi had written this for you instead of Metastasio.

"Write to me, and tell me of *yourself*. Do you remember what Rousseau said to some one: 'Have we quarrelled? you have talked to me often, and never once mentioned yourself.'

"P. S. The last sentence is an indirect apology for my own egotism, — but I believe in letters it is

allowed. I wish it was *mutual.* I have met with an odd reflection in Grimm; it shall not — at least the bad part — be applied to you or me, though *one* of us has certainly an indifferent name — but this it is: 'Many people have the reputation of being wicked, with whom we should be too happy to pass our lives.' I need not add it is a woman's saying, — a Mademoiselle de Sommery's."

At this time Lord Byron commenced a journal or diary, from the pages of which I have already selected a few extracts, and of which I shall now lay as much more as is producible before the reader. Employed chiefly — as such a record, from its nature, must be — about persons still living, and occurrences still recent, it would be impossible, of course, to submit it to the public eye, without the omission of some portion of its contents, and unluckily, too, of that very portion which, from its reference to the secret pursuits and feelings of the writer, would the most livelily pique and gratify the curiosity of the reader. Enough, however, will, I trust, still remain, even after all this necessary winnowing, to enlarge still further the view we have here opened into the interior of the poet's life and habits, and to indulge harmlessly that taste, as general as it is natural, which leads us to contemplate with pleasure a great mind in its undress, and to rejoice in the discovery, so consoling to human pride, that even the mightiest, in their

moments of ease and weakness, resemble ourselves.[57]

JOURNAL, BEGUN NOVEMBER 14, 1813.

"If this had been begun ten years ago, and faithfully kept! — heigho! there are too many things I wish never to have remembered, as it is. Well, I have had my share of what are called the pleasures of this life, and have seen more of the European and Asiatic world than I have made a good use of. They say 'Virtue is its own reward,' — it certainly should be paid well for its trouble. At five and twenty, when the better part of life is over, one should be *something*, — and what am I? nothing but five and twenty — and the odd months. What have I seen? the same man all over the world, — ay, and woman too. Give *me* a Mussulman who never asks questions, and a she of the same race who saves one the trouble of putting them. But for this same plague — yellow fever — and Newstead delay, I should have been by this time a second time close to the Euxine. If I can overcome the last, I don't so much mind your pestilence; and, at any rate, the spring shall see me there, — provided I neither marry myself, nor unmarry any one else in the interval. I wish one was — I don't know what I wish. It is odd I never set myself seriously to wishing without attaining it — and repenting. I begin to believe with the good old Magi, that one

should only pray for the nation, and not for the individual; but, on my principle, this would not be very patriotic.

"No more reflections. Let me see — last night I finished 'Zuleika,' my second Turkish Tale. I believe the composition of it kept me alive — for it was written to drive my thoughts from the recollection of —

'Dear sacred name, rest ever unrevealed.'

At least, even here, my hand would tremble to write it. This afternoon I have burnt the scenes of my commenced comedy. I have some idea of expectorating a romance, or rather a tale in prose; but what romance could equal the events —

'quæque ipse . . . vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui?'

"To-day Henry Byron called on me with my little cousin Eliza. She will grow up a beauty and a plague; but, in the meantime, it is the prettiest child! dark eyes and eyelashes, black and long as the wing of a raven. I think she is prettier even than my niece, Georgina, — yet I don't like to think so neither; and though older, she is not so clever.

"Dallas called before I was up, so we did not meet. Lewis, too, — who seems out of humour with everything. What can be the matter? he is not married — has he lost his own mistress, or any

other person's wife? Hodgson, too, came. He is going to be married, and he is the kind of man who will be the happier. He has talent, cheerfulness, everything that can make him a pleasing companion; and his intended is handsome and young, and all that. But I never see any one much improved by matrimony. All my coupled contemporaries are bald and discontented. W. and S. have both lost their hair and good humour; and the last of the two had a good deal to lose. But it don't much signify what falls *off* a man's temples in that state.

"Mem. I must get a toy to-morrow, for Eliza, and send the device for the seals of myself and ———. Mem. too, to call on the Staël and Lady Holland to-morrow, and on ———, who has advised me (without seeing it, by the by) not to publish 'Zuleika;' I believe he is right, but experience might have taught him that not to print is *physically* impossible. No one has seen it but Hodgson and Mr. Gifford. I never in my life *read* a composition, save to Hodgson, as he pays me in kind. It is a horrible thing to do too frequently; better print, and they who like may read, and if they don't like, you have the satisfaction of knowing that they have, at least, *purchased* the right of saying so.

"I have declined presenting the Debtors' Petition, being sick of parliamentary mummeries. I have spoken thrice; but I doubt my ever becoming

an orator. My first was liked; the second and third — I don't know whether they succeeded or not. I have never yet set to it *con amore*, — one must have some excuse to one's self for laziness, or inability, or both, and this is mine. 'Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me,' — and then, I have 'drunk medicines,' not to make me love others, but certainly enough to hate myself.

"Two night ago I saw the tigers sup at Exeter 'Change. Except Veli Pacha's lion in the Morea, — who followed the Arab keeper like a dog, — the fondness of the hyæna for her keeper amused me most. Such a conversazione! There was a 'hippopotamus,' like Lord L——l in the face; and the 'Ursine Sloth' hath the very voice and manner of my valet — but the tiger talked too much. The elephant took and gave me my money again — took off my hat — opened a door — *trunked* a whip — and behaved so well, that I wish he was my butler. The handsomest animal on earth is one of the panthers; but the poor antelopes were dead. I should hate to see one *here*, — the sight of the *camel* made me pine again for Asia Minor. 'Oh quando te aspiciam?'

"November 16.

"Went last night with Lewis to see the first of 'Antony and Cleopatra.' It was admirably got up, and well acted, — a salad of Shakespeare and

Dryden. Cleopatra strikes me as the epitome of her sex — fond, lively, sad, tender, teasing, humble, haughty, beautiful, the devil! — coquettish to the last, as well with the 'asp' as with Antony. After doing all she can to persuade him that — but why do they abuse him for cutting off that poltroon Cicero's head? Did not Tully tell Brutus it was a pity to have spared Antony? and did he not speak the Philippics? and are not '*words things?*' and such '*words*' very pestilent '*things*' too? If he had had a hundred heads, they deserved (from Antony) a rostrum (his was stuck up there) apiece — though, after all, he might as well have pardoned him, for the credit of the thing. But to resume, Cleopatra, after securing him, says, ,yet go — it is your interest,' — etc., how like the sex! and the questions about Octavia — it is woman all over.

"To-day received Lord Jersey's invitation to Middleton — to travel sixty miles to meet Madame ———! I once travelled three thousand to get among silent people; and this same lady writes octavos, and *talks* folios. I have read her books — like most of them, and delight in the last; so I won't hear it, as well as read.

"Read Burns to-day. What would he have been, if a patrician? We should have had more polish — less force — just as much verse, but no immortality — a divorce and a duel or two, the which had he survived, as his potations must have been less

spirituous, he might have lived as long as Sheridan, and outlived as much as poor Brinsley. What a wreck is that man! and all from bad pilotage; for no one had ever better gales, though now and then a little too squally. Poor dear Sherry! I shall never forget the day he and Rogers and Moore and I passed together; when *he* talked, and *we* listened, without one yawn, from six till one in the morning.

"Got my seals . . . Have again forgot a plaything for *ma petite cousine* Eliza; but I must send for it to-morrow. I hope Harry will bring her to me. I sent Lord Holland the proofs of the last 'Giaour,' and 'The Bride of Abydos.' He won't like the latter, and I don't think that I shall long. It was written in four nights to distract my dreams from ———. Were it not thus, it had never been composed; and had I not done something at that time, I must have gone mad, by eating my own heart, — bitter diet! Hodgson likes it better than 'The Giaour,' but nobody else will, — and he never liked the 'Fragment.' I am sure, had it not been for Murray, *that* would never have been published, though the circumstances which are the groundwork make it . . . heigho-ho!

"To-night I saw both the sisters of ———; my God! the youngest so like! I thought I should have sprung across the house, and am so glad no one was with me in Lady H.'s box. I hate those likenesses — the mock-bird, but not the nightingale —

so like as to remind, so different as to be painful.[58] One quarrels equally with the points of resemblance and of distinction.

"Nov. 17.

"No letter from ———; but I must not complain. The respectable Job says, 'Why should a *living man* complain?' I really don't know, except it be that a *dead man* can't; and he, the said patriarch, *did* complain, nevertheless, till his friends were tired and his wife recommended that pious prologue, 'Curse — and die;' the only time, I suppose, when but little relief is to be found in swearing. I have had a most kind letter from Lord Holland on 'The Bride of Abydos,' which he likes, and so does Lady H. This is very good-natured in both, from whom I don't deserve any quarter. Yet I *did* think, at the time, that my cause of enmity proceeded from Holland House, and am glad I was wrong, and wish I had not been in such a hurry with that confounded satire, of which I would suppress even the memory; but people, now they can't get it, make a fuss, I verily believe, out of contradiction.

"George Ellis and Murray have been talking something about Scott and me, George pro Scoto, — and very right too. If they want to depose him, I only wish they would not set me up as a competitor. Even if I had my choice, I would rather be the Earl of Warwick than all the *kings* he ever made! Jeffrey and Gifford I take to be the mon-

arch-makers in poetry and prose. The *British Critic*, in their 'Rokeby' review, have presupposed a comparison, which I am sure my friends never thought of, and W. Scott's subjects are injudicious in descending to. I like the man — and admire his works to what Mr. Braham calls *entusymusy*. All such stuff can only vex him, and do me no good. Many hate his politics — (I hate all politics); and, here, a man's politics are like the Greek *soul* — an ειδωλον, besides God knows what *other soul;* but their estimate of the two generally go together.

"Harry has not brought *ma petite cousine*. I want us to go to the play together, — she has been but once. Another short note from Jersey, inviting Rogers and me on the 23d. I must see my agent to-night. I wonder when that Newstead business will be finished. It cost me more than words to part with it — and to *have* parted with it! What matters it what I do? or what becomes of me? — but let me remember Job's saying, and console myself with being 'a living man.'

"I wish I could settle to reading again, — my life is so monotonous, and yet desultory. I take up books, and fling them down again. I began a comedy, and burnt it because the scene ran into *reality;* a novel, for the same reason. In rhyme, I can keep more away from facts; but the thought always runs through, through . . . yes, yes, through. I have had a letter from Lady Melbourne

— the best friend I ever had in my life, and the cleverest of women.

"Not a word from ———. Have they set out from ———? or has my last precious epistle fallen into the lion's jaws? If so — and this silence looks suspicious, I must clap on my 'musty morion' and 'hold out my iron.' I am out of practice — but I won't begin again at Manton's now. Besides, I would not return his shot. I was once a famous wafer-splitter; but then the bullies of society made it necessary. Ever since I began to feel that I had a bad cause to support, I have left off the exercise.

"What strange tidings from that Anakim of anarchy, — Buonaparte! Ever since I defended my bust of him at Harrow against the rascally time-servers, when the war broke out in 1803, he has been a 'héros de roman' of mine — on the Continent; I don't want him here. But I don't like those same flights — leaving of armies, etc. I am sure when I fought for his bust at school, I did not think he would run away from himself. But I should not wonder if he banged them yet. To be beat by men would be something; but by three stupid, legitimate-old-dynasty boobies of regular-bred sovereigns — O-hone-a-rie! — O-hone-a-rie! It must be, as Cobbett says, his marriage with the thick-lipped and thick-headed *Autrichienne* brood. He had better have kept to her who was kept by Barras. I never knew any

good come of your young wife, and legal espousals, to any but your 'sober-blooded boy' who 'eats fish' and drinketh 'no sack.' Had he not the whole opera? all Paris? all France? But a mistress is just as perplexing — that is, *one* — two or more are manageable by division.

"I have begun, or had begun, a song, and flung it into the fire. It was in remembrance of Mary Duff, my first of flames, before most people begin to burn. I wonder what the devil is the matter with me! I can do nothing, and — fortunately there is nothing to do. It has lately been in my power to make two persons (and their connections) comfortable, *pro tempore*, and one happy, *ex tempore*, — I rejoice in the last particularly, as it is an excellent man.[59] I wish there had been more inconvenience and less gratification to my self-love in it, for then there had been more merit. We are all selfish — and I believe, ye gods of Epicurus! I believe in Rochefoucault about *men*, and in Lucretius (not Busby's translation) about yourselves. Your bard has made you very *nonchalant* and blest; but as he has excused *us* from damnation, I don't envy you your blessedness *much* — a little, to be sure. I remember, last year, ——— said to me, at ———, 'Have we not passed our last month like the gods of Lucretius?' And so we had. She is an adept in the text of the original (which I like too); and when that booby Bus. sent his translating prospectus, she subscribed. But, the

devil prompting him to add a specimen, she transmitted him a subsequent answer, saying, that 'after perusing it, her conscience would not permit her to allow her name to remain on the list of subscribblers.' Last night, at Lord H.'s, — Mackintosh, the Ossulstones, Puységur, etc., there, — I was trying to recollect a quotation (as *I* think) of Staël's, from some Teutonic sophist about architecture. 'Architecture,' says this Macoronico Tedescho, 'reminds me of frozen music.' It is somewhere — but where? — the demon of perplexity must know and won't tell. I asked M., and he said it was not in her: but P——r said it must be *hers*, it was so *like*. H. laughed, as he does at all 'De l'Allemagne,' in which, however, I think he goes a little too far. B., I hear, contemns it too. But there are fine passages; and, after all, what is a work — any or every work — but a desert with fountains, and, perhaps, a grove or two, every day's journey? To be sure, in madame, what we often mistake, and 'pant for,' as the 'cooling stream,' turns out to be the '*mirage*' (criticè *verbiage*); but we do, at last, get to something like the temple of Jove Ammon, and then the waste we have passed is only remembered to gladden the contrast.

"Called on C——, to explain . . . She is very beautiful, to my taste, at least; for on coming home from abroad, I recollect being unable to look at any woman but her — they were so fair,

and unmeaning, and *blonde.* The darkness and regularity of her features reminded me of my 'Jannat al Aden.' But this impression wore off; and now I can look at a fair woman, without longing for a Houri. She was very good-tempered, and everything was explained.

"To-day, great news, — 'the Dutch have taken Holland,' — which, I suppose, will be succeeded by the actual explosion of the Thames. Five provinces have declared for young Stadt, and there will be inundation, conflagration, constupration, consternation, and every sort of nation and nations, fighting away, up to their knees, in the damnable quags of this will-o'-the-wisp abode of Boors. It is said Bernadotte is amongst them, too; and, as Orange will be there soon, they will have (Crown) Prince Stork and King Log in their Loggery at the same time. Two to one on the new dynasty!

"Mr. Murray has offered me one thousand guineas for 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos.' I won't — it is too much, though I am strongly tempted, merely for the *say* of it. No bad price for a fortnight's (a week each) what? — the gods know — it was intended to be called poetry.

"I have dined regularly to-day, for the first time since Sunday last, — this being Sabbath, too. All the rest, tea and dry biscuits — six *per diem.* I wish to God I had not dined now! It kills me

with heaviness, stupor, and horrible dreams; and yet it was but a pint of bucellas, and fish.[60] Meat I never touch, nor much vegetable diet. I wish I were in the country, to take exercise, instead of being obliged to *cool* by abstinence, in lieu of it. I should not so much mind a little accession of flesh, — my bones can well bear it. But the worst is, the devil always came with it, — till I starved him out, — and I will *not* be the slave of *any* appetite. If I do err, it shall be my heart, at least, that heralds the way. Oh, my head — how it aches! — the horrors of digestion! I wonder how Buonaparte's dinner agrees with him?

"Mem. I must write to-morrow to 'Master Shallow, who owes me a thousand pounds,' and seems, in his letter, afraid I should ask him for it;[61] as if I would! I don't want it (just now, at least), to begin with; and though I have often wanted that sum, I never asked for the repayment of £10 in my life — from a friend. His bond is not due this year, and I told him when it was, I should not enforce it. How often must he make me say the same thing?

"I am wrong — I did once ask ———[62] to repay me. But it was under circumstances that excused me *to him*, and would to any one. I took no interest, nor required security. He paid me soon, — at least, his *padre*. My head! I believe it was given me to ache with. Good even.

"Nov. 22, 1813.

"'Orange Boven!' So the bees have expelled the bear that broke open their hive. Well, — if we are to have new De Witts and De Ruyters, God speed the little republic! I should like to see the Hague and the village of Brock, where they have such primitive habits. Yet, I don't know, — their canals would cut a poor figure by the memory of the Bosphorus; and the Zuyder Zee look awkwardly after 'Ak-Denizi.' No matter, — the bluff burghers, puffing freedom out of their short tobacco-pipes, might be worth seeing; though I prefer a cigar or a hooka, with the rose-leaf mixed with the milder herb of the Levant. I don't know what liberty means, — never having seen it, — but wealth is power all over the world; and as a shilling performs the duty of a pound (besides sun and sky and beauty for nothing) in the East, — *that* is the country. How I envy Herodes Atticus! — more than Pomponius. And yet a little *tumult*, now and then, is an agreeable quickener of sensation; such as a revolution, a battle, or an *adventure* of any lively description. I think I rather would have been Bonneval, Ripperda, Alberoni, Hayreddin, or Horuc Barbarossa, or even Wortley Montagu, than Mahomet himself.

"Rogers will be in town soon? — the 23d is fixed for our Middleton visit. Shall I go? umph! — In this island, where one can't ride out without overtaking the sea, it don't much matter where one goes.

"I remember the effect of the *first Edinburgh Review* on me. I heard of it six weeks before, — read it the day of its denunciation, — dined and drank three bottles of claret (with S. B. Davies, I think), neither ate nor slept the less, but, nevertheless, was not easy till I had vented my wrath and my rhyme, in the same pages, against everything and everybody. Like George, in the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' 'the fate of my paradoxes' would allow me to perceive no merit in another. I remembered only the maxim of my boxing-master, which, in my youth, was found useful in all general riots, — 'Whoever is not for you is against you — *mill* away right and left,' — and so I did; like Ishmael, my hand was against all men, and all men's anent me. I did wonder, to be sure, at my own success:

"'And marvels so much wit is all his own,'

as Hobhouse sarcastically says of somebody (not unlikely myself, as we are old friends); but were it to come over again, I would *not*. I have since redde[63] the cause of my couplets, and it is not adequate to the effect. C—— told me that it was believed I alluded to poor Lord Carlisle's nervous disorder in one of the lines. I thank Heaven I did not know it — and would not, could not, if I had. I must naturally be the last person to be pointed on defects or maladies.

"Rogers is silent, — and, it is said, severe. When he does talk, he talks well; and, on all subjects of

taste, his delicacy of expression is pure as his poetry. If you enter his house — his drawing-room — his library — you of yourself say, this is not the dwelling of a common mind. There is not a gem, a coin, a book thrown aside on his chimneypiece, his sofa, his table, that does not bespeak an almost fastidious elegance in the possessor. But this very delicacy must be the misery of his existence. Oh, the jarrings his disposition must have encountered through life!

"Southey, I have not seen much of. His appearance is *epic;* and he is the only existing entire man of letters. All the others have some pursuit annexed to their authorship. His manners are mild, but not those of a man of the world, and his talents of the first order. His prose is perfect. Of his poetry there are various opinions: there is, perhaps, too much of it for the present generation, — posterity will probably select. He has *passages* equal to anything. At present, he has a *party*, but no *public* — except for his prose writings. The life of Nelson is beautiful.

"——— is a *littérateur*, the Oracle of the Coteries, of the ——s, L—— W—— (Sydney Smith's 'Tory Virgin'), Mrs. Wilmot (she, at least, is a swan, and might frequent a purer stream), Lady B——, and all the Blues, with Lady C—— at their head — but I say nothing of *her* — 'look in her face and you forget them all,' and everything else. Oh that face! — by 'te, Diva potens Cypri,' I would,

to be beloved by that woman, build and burn another Troy.

"M——e has a peculiarity of talent, or rather talents, — poetry, music, voice, all his own; and an expression in each, which never was, nor will be, possessed by another. But he is capable of still higher flights in poetry. By the by, what humour, what — everything, in the 'Post-Bag!' There is nothing M——e may not do, if he will but seriously set about it. In society, he is gentlemanly, gentle, and, altogether, more pleasing than any individual with whom I am acquainted. For his honour, principle, and independence, his conduct to ——— speaks 'trumpet-tongued.' He has but one fault, — and that one I daily regret, — he is not *here*.

"November 23.

"Ward — I like Ward.[64] By Mahomet! I begin to think I like everybody, — a disposition not to be encouraged; a sort of social gluttony that swallows everything set before it. But I like Ward. He is *piquant;* and, in my opinion, will stand *very* high in the House, and everywhere else, if he applies *regularly*. By the by, I dine with him to-morrow, which may have some influence on my opinion. It is as well not to trust one's gratitude *after* dinner. I have heard many a host libelled by his guests, with his burgundy yet reeking on their rascally lips.

"I have taken Lord Salisbury's box at Covent Garden for the season; and now I must go and

prepare to join Lady Holland and party, in theirs, at Drury Lane, *questa sera.*

"Holland doesn't think the man *is Junius;* but that the yet unpublished journal throws great light on the obscurities of that part of George the Second's reign. What is this to George the Third's? I don't know what to think. Why should Junius be yet dead? If suddenly apoplexed, would he rest in his grave without sending his ειδωλον to shout in the ears of posterity, 'Junius was X. Y. Z., Esq., buried in the parish of ———. Repair his monument, ye churchwardens! Print a new edition of his Letters, ye booksellers!' Impossible, — the man must be alive, and will never die without the disclosure. I like him, — he was a good hater.

"Came home unwell and went to bed, — not so sleepy as might be desirable.

"Tuesday morning.

"I awoke from a dream! — well! and have not others dreamed? Such a dream! but she did not overtake me. I wish the dead would rest, however. Ugh! how my blood chilled — and I could not wake — and — and — heigho!

"'Shadows to-night
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard,
Than could the substance of ten thousand ——s,
Arm'd all in proof, and led by shallow ———.'

I do not like this dream, — I hate its 'foregone conclusion.' And am I to be shaken by shadows? Ay, when they remind us of — no matter — but, if

I dream thus again, I will try whether *all* sleep has the like visions. Since I rose, I've been in considerable bodily pain also; but it is gone, and now, like Lord Ogleby, I am wound up for the day.

"A note from Mountnorris — I dine with Ward; Canning is to be there, Frere and Sharpe, — perhaps Gifford. I am to be one of 'the five' (or rather six), as Lady ——— said a little sneeringly yesterday. They are all good to meet, particularly Canning, and — Ward, when he likes. I wish I may be well enough to listen to these intellectuals.

"No letters to-day; so much the better, — there are no answers. I must not dream again; it spoils even reality. I will go out-of-doors, and see what the fog will do for me. Jackson has been here: the boxing world much as usual; but the club increases. I shall dine at Crib's to-morrow. I like energy — even animal energy — of all kinds; and I have need of both mental and corporeal. I have not dined out, nor, indeed, *at all*, lately; have heard no music — have seen nobody. Now for a *plunge* — high life and low life. 'Amant *alterna* Camœnæ!'

"I have burnt my *Roman* — as I did the first scenes and sketch of my comedy — and, for aught I see, the pleasure of burning is quite as great as that of printing. These two last would not have done. I ran into *realities* more than ever; and some would have been recognised and others guessed at.

"Redde the 'Ruminator' — a collection of essays,

by a strange, but able, old man (Sir E. B.), and a half-wild young one, author of a poem on the Highlands, called 'Childe Alarique.' The word 'sensibility' (always my aversion) occurs a thousand times in these essays; and, it seems, is to be an excuse for all kinds of discontent. This young man can know nothing of life; and, if he cherishes the disposition which runs through his papers, will become useless, and, perhaps, not even a poet, after all, which he seems determined to be. God help him! no one should be a rhymer who could be anything better. And this is what annoys one, to see Scott and Moore, and Campbell and Rogers, who might have all been agents and leaders, now mere spectators. For, though they may have other ostensible avocations, these last are reduced to a secondary consideration. ———, too, frittering away his time among dowagers and unmarried girls. If it advanced any *serious* affair, it were some excuse; but, with the unmarried, that is a hazardous speculation, and tiresome enough, too; and, with the veterans, it is not much worth trying, unless, perhaps, one in a thousand.

"If I had any views in this country, they would probably be parliamentary. But I have no ambition; at least, if any, it would be 'aut Cæsar aut nihil.' My hopes are limited to the arrangement of my affairs, and settling either in Italy or the East (rather the last), and drinking deep of the languages and literature of both. Past events have

unnerved me; and all I can now do is to make life an amusement, and look on while others play. After all, even the highest game of crowns and sceptres, what is it? *Vide* Napoleon's last twelvemonth. It has completely upset my system of fatalism. I thought, if crushed, he would have fallen, when 'fractus illabitur orbis,' and not have been pared away to gradual insignificance; that all this was not a mere *jeu* of the gods, but a prelude to greater changes and mightier events. But men never advance beyond a certain point; and here we are, retrograding to the dull, stupid old system, — balance of Europe — poising straws upon kings' noses, instead of wringing them off! Give me a republic, or a despotism of one, rather than the mixed government of one, two, three. A republic! — look in the history of the earth — Rome, Greece, Venice, France, Holland, America, our short (eheu!) Commonwealth, and compare it with what they did under masters. The Asiatics are not qualified to be republican, but they have the liberty of demolishing despots, which is the next thing to it. To be the first man — not the Dictator — not the Sylla, but the Washington or the Aristides — the leader in talent and truth — is next to the Divinity! Franklin, Penn, and, next to these, either Brutus or Cassius — even Mirabeau — or St. Just. I shall never be anything, or rather always be nothing. The most I can hope is, that some will say, 'He might, perhaps, if he would.'

"12, midnight.

"Here are two confounded proofs from the printer. I have looked at the one, but for the soul of me, I can't look over that 'Giaour' again, — at least, just now, and at this hour — and yet there is no moon.

"Ward talks of going to Holland, and we have partly discussed an *ensemble* expedition. It must be in ten days, if at all, if we wish to be in at the Revolution. And why not? ——— is distant, and will be at ———, still more distant, till spring. No one else, except Augusta, cares for me; no ties — no trammels — *andiamo dunque — se torniamo, bene — se non, ch' importa?* Old William of Orange talked of dying in 'the last ditch' of his dingy country. It is lucky I can swim, or I suppose I should not well weather the first. But let us see. I have heard hyænas and jackals in the ruins of Asia; and bullfrogs in the marshes; besides wolves and angry Mussulmans. Now, I should like to listen to the shout of a free Dutchman.

"Alla! Viva! For ever! Hourra! Huzza! — which is the most rational or musical of these cries? 'Orange Boven,' according to the *Morning Post.*

"Wednesday, 24.

"No dreams last night of the dead nor the living, so — I am 'firm as the marble, founded as the rock,' till the next earthquake.

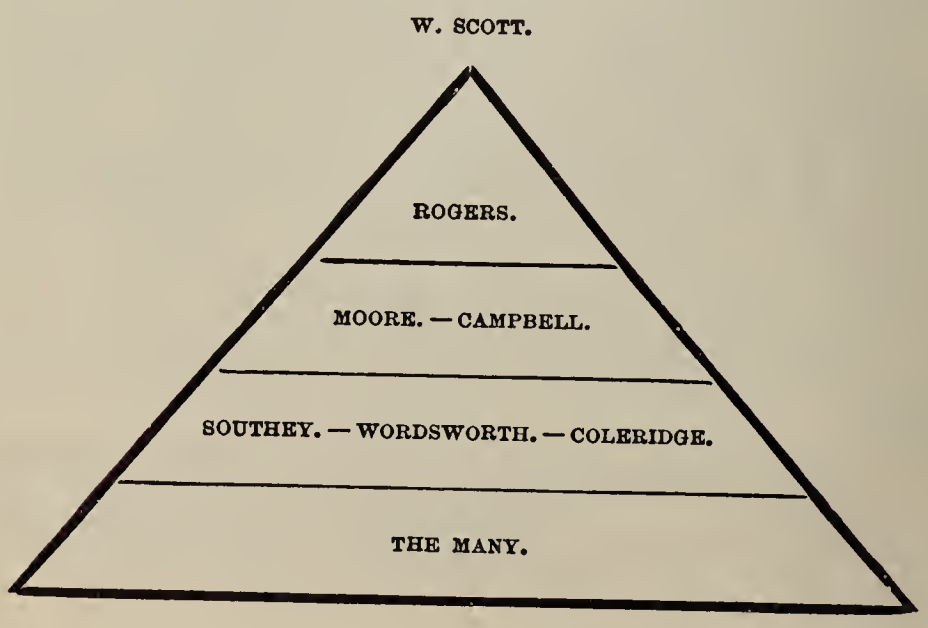
"Ward's dinner went off well. There was not a

disagreeable person there — unless *I* offended anybody, which I am sure I could not by contradiction, for I said little, and opposed nothing. Sharpe (a man of elegant mind, and who has lived much with the best, — Fox, Horne Tooke, Windham, Fitzpatrick, and all the agitators of other times and tongues) told us the particulars of his last interview with Windham, a few days before the fatal operation which sent 'that gallant spirit to aspire the skies.' Windham, — the first in one department of oratory and talent, whose only fault was his refinement beyond the intellect of half his hearers, — Windham, half his life an active participator in the events of the earth, and one of those who governed nations, — *he* regretted, and dwelt much on that regret, that 'he had not entirely devoted himself to literature and science!' His mind certainly would have carried him to eminence there, as elsewhere, — but I cannot comprehend what debility of that mind could suggest such a wish. I, who have heard him, cannot regret anything but that I shall never hear him again. What! would he have been a plodder? a metaphysician? perhaps a rhymer? a scribbler? Such an exchange must have been suggested by illness. But he is gone and Time 'shall not look upon his like again.'

"I am tremendously in arrear with my letters, — except to ———, and to her my thoughts overpower me: my words never compass them. To

Lady Melbourne I write with most pleasure — and her answers, so sensible, so *tactique* — I never met with half her talent. If she had been a few years younger, what a fool she would have made of me, had she thought it worth her while, — and I should have lost a valuable and most agreeable *friend*. Mem. a mistress never is nor can be a friend. While you agree, you are lovers; and, when it is over, anything but friends.

"I have not answered W. Scott's last letter, — but I will. I regret to hear from others that he has lately been unfortunate in pecuniary involvements. He is undoubtedly the Monarch of Parnassus, and the most *English* of bards. I should place Rogers next in the living list (I value him more as the last of the *best* school) — Moore and Campbell both *third* — Southey and Wordsworth and Coleridge — the rest, οἱ πολλοι — thus:



There is a triangular 'Gradus ad Parnassum!' — the names are too numerous for the base of the triangle. Poor Thurlow has gone wild about the poetry of Queen Bess's reign — *c'est dommage.* I have ranked the names upon my triangle more upon what I believe popular opinion, than any decided opinion of my own. For, to me, some of M——e's last *Erin* sparks — 'As a beam o'er the face of the waters,' 'When he who adores thee,' 'Oh, blame not,' and 'Oh, breathe not his name' — are worth all the epics that ever were composed.

"——— thinks the *Quarterly* will attack me next. Let them. I have been 'peppered so highly' in my time, *both* ways, that it must be cayenne or aloes to make me taste. I can sincerely say that I am not very much alive *now* to criticism. But — in tracing this — I rather believe, that it proceeds from my not attaching that importance to authorship which many do, and which, when young, I did also. 'One gets tired of everything, my angel,' says Valmont. The 'angels' are the only things of which I am not a little sick — but I do think the preference of *writers* to *agents* — the mighty stir made about scribbling and scribes, by themselves and others — a sign of effeminacy, degeneracy, and weakness. Who would write, who had anything better to do? 'Action — action — action,' said Demosthenes: 'Actions — actions,' I say, and not writing, — least of all, rhyme. Look

at the querulous and monotonous lives of the 'genius;' except Cervantes, Tasso, Dante, Ariosto, Kleist (who were brave and active citizens), Æschylus, Sophocles, and some other of the antiques also — what a worthless, idle brood it is!

"12, Mezza notte.

"Just returned from dinner with Jackson (the Emperor of Pugilism) and another of the select, at Crib's the champion's. I drank more than I like, and have brought away some three bottles of very fair claret — for I have no headache. We had Tom ——— up after dinner; very facetious, though somewhat prolix. He don't like his situation — wants to fight again — pray Pollux (or Castor, if he was the *miller*) he may! Tom has been a sailor, a coal-heaver, and some other genteel profession, before he took to the cestus. Tom has been in action at sea, and is now only three and thirty. A great man! has a wife and a mistress, and conversations well — bating some sad omissions and misapplications of the aspirate. Tom is an old friend of mine; I have seen some of his best battles in my nonage. He is now a publican, and, I fear, a sinner; for Mrs. ——— is on alimony, and ———'s daughter lives with the champion. *This* ——— told me, — Tom, having an opinion of my morals, passed her off as a legal spouse. Talking of her, he said, 'she was the truest of women,' — from which I immediately in-

ferred she could *not* be his wife, and so it turned out.

"These panegyrics don't belong to matrimony; for, if 'true,' a man don't think it necessary to say so; and if not, the less he says the better. ——— is the only man, except ———, I ever heard harangue upon his wife's virtue; and I listened to both with great credence and patience, and stuffed my handkerchief into my mouth, when I found yawning irresistible. By the by, I am yawning now — so, good night to thee. — Νωάιρων.

"Thursday, November 26.

"Awoke a little feverish, but no headache — no dreams neither, thanks to stupor! Two letters; one from ———'s, the other from Lady Melbourne — both excellent in their respective styles. ———'s contained also a very pretty lyric on 'concealed griefs;' if not her own, yet very like her. Why did she not say that the stanzas were, or were not, of her composition? I do not know whether to wish them *hers* or not. I have no great esteem for poetical persons, particularly women; they have so much of the 'ideal' in *practics*, as well as *ethics*.

"I have been thinking lately a good deal of Mary Duff, etc.[65]

"Lord Holland invited me to dinner to-day; but three days' dining would destroy me. So, without eating at all since yesterday, I went to my box at Covent Garden.

"Saw ——— looking very pretty, though quite a different style of beauty from the other two. She has the finest eyes in the world, out of which she pretends *not* to see, and the longest eyelashes I ever saw, since Leila's and Phannio's Moslem curtains of the light. She has much beauty, — just enough, — but is, I think, *méchante*.

"I have been pondering on the miseries of separation, that — oh, how seldom we see those we love! yet we live ages in moments, *when met*. The only thing that consoles me during absence is the reflection that no mental or personal estrangement, from *ennui* or disagreement, can take place; and when people meet hereafter, even though many changes may have taken place in the meantime, still, unless they are *tired* of each other, they are ready to reunite, and do not blame each other for the circumstances that severed them.

"Saturday 27. (I believe — or rather am in *doubt*, which is the ne plus ultra of mortal faith.)

"I have missed a day; and, as the Irishman said, or Joe Miller says for him, 'have gained a loss,' or *by* the loss. Everything is settled for Holland, and nothing but a cough, or a caprice of my fellow traveller's, can stop us. Carriage ordered, funds prepared, and, probably, a gale of wind into the bargain. *N'importe* — I believe, with Clym o' the Clow, or Robin Hood, 'By our Mary (dear

name!), that art both Mother and May, I think it never was a man's lot to die before this day.' Heigh for Helvoetsluys, and so forth!

"To-night I went with young Henry Fox to see 'Nourjahad,' a drama, which the *Morning Post* hath laid to my charge, but of which I cannot even guess the author. I wonder what they will next inflict upon me. They cannot well sink below a melodrama; but that is better than a satire (at least, a personal one), with which I stand truly arraigned, and in atonement of which I am resolved to bear silently all criticisms, abuses, and even praises, for bad pantomimes never composed by me, without even a contradictory aspect. I suppose the root of this report is my loan to the manager of my Turkish drawings for his dresses, to which he was more welcome than to my name. I suppose the real author will soon own it, as it has succeeded; if not, Job be my model, and Lethe my beverage!

"——— has received the portrait safe; and, in answer, the only remark she makes upon it is, 'indeed it is like'—and again, 'indeed it is like.' With her the likeness 'covered a multitude of sins;' for I happen to know that this portrait was not a flatterer, but dark and stern,—even black as the mood in which my mind was scorching last July, when I sat for it. All the others of me, like most portraits whatsoever, are, of course, more agreeable than nature.

"Redde the *Ed. Review* of Rogers. He is ranked highly; but where he should be. There is a summary view of us all — *Moore* and *me* among the rest; and both (the *first* justly) praised — though, by implication (justly again) placed beneath our memorable friend. Mackintosh is the writer, and also of the critique on the Staël. His grand essay on Burke, I hear, is for the next number. But I know nothing of the *Edinburgh*, or of any other review, but from rumour; and I have long ceased — indeed, I could not, in justice, complain of any, even though I were to rate poetry, in general, and my rhymes in particular, more highly than I really do. To withdraw *myself* from *myself* (oh, that cursed selfishness!) has ever been my sole, my entire, my sincere motive in scribbling at all; and publishing is also the continuance of the same object, by the action it affords to the mind, which else recoils upon itself. If I valued fame, I should flatter received opinions, which have gathered strength by time, and will yet wear longer than any living works to the contrary. But, for the soul of me, I cannot and will not give the lie to my own thoughts and doubts, come what may. If I am a fool, it is, at least, a doubting one; and I envy no one the certainty of his self-approved wisdom.

"All are inclined to believe what they covet, from a lottery-ticket up to a passport to Paradise, — in which, from the description, I see nothing

very tempting. My restlessness tells me I have something within that 'passeth show.' It is for Him, who made it, to prolong that spark of celestial fire which illuminates, yet burns, this frail tenement; but I see no such horror in a 'dreamless sleep,' and I have no conception of any existence which duration would not render tiresome. How else 'fell the angels,' even according to your creed? They were immortal, heavenly, and happy as their *apostate Abdiel* is now by his treachery. Time must decide; and eternity won't be the less agreeable or more horrible because one did not expect it. In the meantime, I am grateful for some good, and tolerably patient under certain evils — grâce à Dieu et mon bon tempérament.

"Sunday, 28th.

"Monday, 29th.

"Tuesday, 30th.

"Two days missed in my log-book; — hiatus *haud* deflendus. They were as little worth recollection as the rest; and, luckily, laziness or society prevented me from *notching* them.

"Sunday, I dined with the Lord Holland in St. James's Square. Large party — among them Sir S. Romilly and Lady R. — General Sir Somebody Bentham, a man of science and talent, I am told — Horner — *the* Horner, an Edinburgh reviewer, an excellent speaker in the 'Honourable

House,' very pleasing too, and gentlemanly in company, as far as I have seen — Sharpe — Phillips of Lancashire — Lord John Russell, and others, 'good men and true.' Holland's society is very good; you always see some one or other in it worth knowing. Stuffed myself with sturgeon, and exceeded in champagne and wine in general, but not to confusion of head. When I *do* dine, I gorge like an Arab or a boa snake, on fish and vegetables, but no meat. I am always better, however, on my tea and biscuit than any other regimen, and even *that* sparingly.

"Why does Lady H. always have that damned screen between the whole room and the fire? I, who bear cold no better than an antelope, and never yet found a sun quite *done* to my taste, was absolutely petrified, and could not even shiver. All the rest, too, looked as if they were just unpacked, like salmon from an ice-basket, and set down to table for that day only. When she retired, I watched their looks as I dismissed the screen, and every cheek thawed, and every nose reddened with the anticipated glow.

"Saturday, I went with Harry Fox to 'Nourjahad;' and, I believe, convinced him, by incessant yawning, that it was not mine. I wish the precious author would own it, and release me from his fame. The dresses are pretty, but not in costume; Mrs. Horne's, all but the turban, and the want of a small dagger (if she is a sultana), *perfect.*

I never saw a Turkish woman with a turban in my life — nor did any one else. The sultanas have a small poniard at the waist. The dialogue is drowsy — the action heavy — the scenery fine — the actors tolerable. I can't say much for their seraglio — Teresa, Phannio, or ———, were worth them all.

"Sunday, a very handsome note from Mackintosh, who is a rare instance of the union of very transcendent talent and great good nature. To-day (Tuesday) a very pretty billet from M. la Baronne de Staël Holstein. She is pleased to be much pleased with my mention of her and her last work in my notes. I spoke as I thought. Her works are my delight, and so is she herself, for — half an hour. I don't like her politics — as least, her *having changed* them; had she been *qualis ab incepto*, it were nothing. But she is a woman by herself, and has done more than all the rest of them together, intellectually, — she ought to have been a man. She *flatters* me very prettily in her note; but I *know* it. The reason that adulation is not displeasing is, that, though untrue, it shows one to be of consequence enough, in one way or other, to induce people to lie, to make us their friend: that is their concern.

"——— is, I hear, thriving on the repute of a *pun* which was *mine* (at Mackintosh's dinner some time back), on Ward, who was asking 'how much it would take to *re-whig* him?' I answered that,

probably, 'he must first, before he was *re-whigged*, be re-*warded*.' This foolish quibble, before the Staël and Mackintosh, and a number of conversationers, has been mouthed about, and at last settled on the head of ———, where long may it remain!

"George [66] is returned from afloat to get a new ship. He looks thin, but better than I expected. I like George much more than most people like their heirs. He is a fine fellow, and every inch a sailor. I would do anything, *but apostatise*, to get him on in his profession.

"Lewis called. It is a good and good-humoured man, but pestilently prolix and paradoxical and *personal*. If he would but talk half, and reduce his visits to an hour, he would add to his popularity. As an author he is very good, and his vanity is *ouverte*, like Erskine's, and yet not offending.

"Yesterday, a very pretty letter from Annabella,[67] which I answered. What an odd situation and friendship is ours! — without one spark of love on either side, and produced by circumstances which in general lead to coldness on one side, and aversion on the other. She is a very superior woman, and very little spoiled, which is strange in an heiress — a girl of twenty — a peeress that is to be, in her own right — an only child, and a *savante*, who has always had her own way. She is a poetess — a mathematician — a metaphysician, and yet, withal, very kind, generous, and gentle, with very little pretension. Any other head would

be turned with half her acquisitions, and a tenth of her advantages.

"Wednesday, December 1, 1813.

"To-day responded to La Baronne de Staël Holstein, and sent to Leigh Hunt (an acquisition to my acquaintance — through Moore — of last summer) a copy of the two Turkish tales. Hunt is an extraordinary character, and not exactly of the present age. He reminds me more of the Pym and Hampden times — much talent, great independence of spirit, and an austere, yet not repulsive, aspect. If he goes on *qualis ab incepto*, I know few men who will deserve more praise or obtain it. I must go and see him again, — the rapid succession of adventure since last summer, added to some serious uneasiness and business, have interrupted our acquaintance; but he is a man worth knowing; and though, for his own sake, I wish him out of prison, I like to study character in such situations. He has been unshaken, and will continue so. I don't think him deeply versed in life; he is the bigot of virtue (not religion), and enamoured of the beauty of that 'empty name,' as the last breath of Brutus pronounced, and every day proves it. He is, perhaps, a little opiniated, as all men who are the *centre* of *circles*, wide or narrow — the Sir Oracles, in whose name two or three are gathered together — must be, and as even Johnson was; but, withal, a valuable man, and less vain than success

and even the consciousness of preferring 'the right to the expedient' might excuse.

"To-morrow there is a party of *purple* at the 'blue' Miss ———'s. Shall I go? um! I don't much affect your blue-bottles; but one ought to be civil. There will be, 'I guess now' (as the Americans say), the Staëls and Mackintoshes — good; the ———s and ———s — not so good; the ———s, etc. — good for nothing. Perhaps that blue-winged Kashmirian butterfly of book-learning, Lady ———, will be there. I hope so; it is a pleasure to look upon that most beautiful of faces.

"Wrote to H. He has been telling that I . . .[68] I am sure, at least, *I* did not mention it, and I wish he had not. He is a good fellow, and I obliged myself ten times more by being of use than I did him, — and there's an end on't.

"Baldwin is boring me to present their King's Bench petition. I presented Cartwright's last year; and Stanhope and I stood against the whole House, and mouthed it valiantly — and had some fun and a little abuse for our opposition. But 'I am not i' th' vein' for this business. Now, had ——— been here, she would have *made* me do it. *There* is a woman, who, amid all her fascination, always urged a man to usefulness or glory. Had she remained, she had been my tutelar genius.

"Baldwin is very importunate; but, poor fellow, 'I can't get out, I can't get out — said the

starling.' Ah, I am as bad as that dog Sterne, who preferred whining over 'a dead ass to relieving a living mother' — villain — hypocrite — slave sycophant! but *I* am no better. Here I cannot stimulate myself to a speech for the sake of these unfortunates, and three words and half a smile of ———, had she been here to urge it (and urge it she infallibly would — at least she always pressed me on senatorial duties, and particularly in the cause of weakness), would have made me an advocate, if not an orator. Curse on Rochefoucault for being always right! In him a lie were virtue, — or, at least, a comfort to his readers.

"George Byron has not called to-day; I hope he will be an admiral, and, perhaps, Lord Byron into the bargain. If he would but marry, I would engage never to marry myself, or cut him out of the heirship. He would be happier, and I should like nephews better than sons.

"I shall soon be six and twenty (January 22d, 1814). Is there anything in the future that can possibly console us for not being always *twenty-five?*

"'Oh Gioventu!
Oh Primavera! gioventu dell' anno.
Oh Gioventu! primavera della vita.'

"Sunday, December 5.

"Dallas's nephew (son to the American attorney-general) is arrived in this country, and tells Dallas that my rhymes are very popular in the

United States. These are the first tidings that have ever sounded like *Fame* to my ears — to be redde on the banks of the Ohio! The greatest pleasure I ever derived, of this kind, was from an extract, in Cooke the actor's life, from his journal, stating that in the reading-room at Albany, near Washington, he perused 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' To be popular in a rising and far country has a kind of *posthumous feel*, very different from the ephemeral *éclat* and fête-ing, buzzing, and party-ing compliments of the well-dressed multitude. I can safely say that, during my *reign* in the spring of 1812, I regretted nothing but its duration of six weeks instead of a fortnight, and was heartily glad to resign.

"Last night I supped with Lewis; and, as usual, though I neither exceeded in solids nor fluids, have been half dead ever since. My stomach is entirely destroyed by long abstinence, and the rest will probably follow. Let it — I only wish the *pain* over. The 'leap in the dark' is the least to be dreaded.

"The Duke of ——— called. I have told them forty times that, except to half a dozen old and specified acquaintances, I am invisible. His Grace is a good, noble, ducal person; but I am content to think so at a distance, and so — I was not at home.

"Galt called. Mem. — to ask some one to speak to Raymond in favour of his play. We are old

fellow travellers, and, with all his eccentricities, he has much strong sense, experience of the world, and is, as far as I have seen, a good-natured philosophical fellow. I showed him Sligo's letter on the reports of the Turkish girl's *aventure* at Athens soon after it happened. He and Lord Holland, Lewis, and Moore, and Rogers, and Lady Melbourne have seen it. Murray has a copy. I thought it had been *unknown* and wish it were; but Sligo arrived only some days after, and the *rumours* are the subject of his letter. That I shall preserve, — *it is as well.* Lewis and Galt were both *horrified;* and L. wondered I did not introduce the situation into 'The Giaour.' He *may* wonder; he might wonder more at that production's being written at all. But to describe the *feelings* of *that situation* were impossible, — it is *icy* even to recollect them.

"The 'Bride of Abydos' was published on Thursday the second of December; but how it is liked or disliked, I know not. Whether it succeeds or not is no fault of the public, against whom I can have no complaint. But I am much more indebted to the tale than I can ever be to the most partial reader; as it wrung my thoughts from reality to imagination — from selfish regrets to vivid recollections — and recalled me to a country replete with the *brightest* and *darkest*, but always most *lively* colours of my memory. Sharpe called, but was not let in — which I regret.

"Saw ——— yesterday. I have not kept my appointment at Middleton, which has not pleased him, perhaps; and my projected voyage with ——— will, perhaps, please him less. But I wish to keep well with both. They are instruments that don't do, in concert; but, surely, their separate tones are very musical, and I won't give up either.

"It is well if I don't jar between these great discords. At present I stand tolerably well with all, but I cannot adopt their *dislikes*, — so many *sets*. Holland's is the first; everything *distingué* is welcome there, and certainly the *ton* of his society is the best. Then there is M^de^. de Staël's; there I never go, though I might, had I courted it. It is composed of the ———'s and the ——— family, with a strange sprinkling, — orators, dandies, and all kinds of *Blue*, from the regular Grub Street uniform, down to the azure jacket of the *Littérateur*. To see ——— and ——— sitting together, at dinner, always reminds me of the grave, where all distinctions of friend and foe are levelled; and they — the reviewer and reviewée — the rhinoceros and elephant — the mammoth and megalonyx — all will lie quietly together. They now *sit* together, as silent, but not so quiet, as if they were already immured.

"I did not go to the Berrys' the other night. The elder is a woman of much talent, and both are handsome, and must have been beautiful. To-night asked to Lord H.'s — shall I go? um! — perhaps.

"Morning, two o'clock.

"Went to Lord H.'s — party numerous — *mi*lady in perfect good humour, and consequently *perfect*. No one more agreeable, or perhaps so much so, when she will. Asked for Wednesday to dine and meet the Staël — asked particularly, I believe, out of mischief, to see the first interview after the *note*, with which Corinne professes herself to be so much taken. I don't much like it; she always talks of *my*self or *her*self, and I am not (except in soliloquy, as now) much enamoured of either subject — especially one's works. What the devil shall I say about 'De l'Allemagne?' I like it prodigiously; but unless I can twist my admiration into some fantastical expression, she won't believe me; and I know, by experience, I shall be overwhelmed with fine things about rhyme, etc. The lover, Mr. ———, was there to-night, and C—— said 'it was the only proof *he* had seen of her good taste.' Monsieur L'Amant is remarkably handsome; but *I* don't think more so than her book.

"C—— looks well, — seems pleased, and dressed to *sprucery*. A blue coat becomes him, — so does his new wig. He really looked as if Apollo had sent him a birthday suit, or a wedding garment, and was witty and lively. He abused Corinne's book, which I regret; because, firstly, he understands German, and is consequently a fair judge; and, secondly, he is *first-rate*, and consequently the best of judges. I reverence and admire him; but

I won't give up my opinion — why should I? I read *her* again and again, and there can be no affectation in this. I cannot be mistaken (except in taste) in a book I read and lay down, and take up again; and no book can be totally bad which finds *one*, even *one* reader, who can say as much sincerely.

"C. talks of lecturing next spring; his last lectures were eminently successful. Moore thought of it, but gave it up, — I don't know why. ——— had been prating *dignity* to him, and such stuff; as if a man disgraced himself by instructing and pleasing at the same time.

"Introduced to Marquis Buckingham — saw Lord Gower — he is going to Holland; Sir J. and Lady Mackintosh and Horner, G. Lamb, with I know not how many (R. Wellesley, one — a clever man), grouped about the room. Little Henry Fox, a very fine boy, and very promising in mind and manner, — he went away to bed, before I had time to talk to him. I am sure I had rather hear him than all the *savans*.

"Monday, Dec. 6.

"Murray tells me that C——r asked him why the thing was called the '*Bride* of Abydos?' It is a cursed awkward question, being unanswerable. *She* is not a *bride*, only about to be one; but for, etc.

"I don't wonder at his finding out the *Bull;* but the detection . . . is too late to do any good. I

was a great fool to make it, and am ashamed of not being an Irishman.

"C——l last night seemed a little nettled at something or other—I know not what. We were standing in the ante-saloon, when Lord H. brought out of the other room a vessel of some composition similar to that which is used in Catholic churches, and, seeing us, he exclaimed, 'Here is some *incense* for you.' C——l answered, 'Carry it to Lord Byron, *he is used to it.*'

"Now, this comes of 'bearing no brother near the throne.' I, who have no throne, nor wish to have one *now*, whatever I may have done, am at perfect peace with all the poetical fraternity; or, at least, if I dislike any, it is not *poetically*, but *personally.* Surely the field of thought is infinite; what does it signify who is before or behind in a race where there is no *goal?* The temple of fame is like that of the Persians, the universe; our altar, the tops of mountains. I should be equally content with Mount Caucasus, or Mount Anything; and those who like it, may have Mont Blanc or Chimborazo, without my envy of their elevation.

"I think I may *now* speak thus; for I have just published a poem, and am quite ignorant whether it is *likely* to be *liked* or not. I have hitherto heard little in its commendation, and no one can *downright* abuse it to one's face, except in print. It can't be good, or I should not have stumbled over the threshold, and blundered in my very title.

But I began it with my heart full of . . . , and my head of orientalities (I can't call them *isms*), and wrote on rapidly.

"This journal is a relief. When I am tired — as I generally am — out comes this, and down goes everything. But I can't read it over; and God knows what contradictions it may contain. If I am sincere with myself (but I fear one lies more to oneself than to any one else), every page should confute, refute, and utterly abjure its predecessor.

"Another scribble from Martin Baldwin, the petitioner; I have neither head nor nerves to present it. That confounded supper at Lewis's has spoiled my digestion and my philanthropy. I have no more charity than a cruet of vinegar. Would I were an ostrich, and dieted on fire-irons, — or anything that my gizzard could get the better of.

"To-day saw W. His uncle is dying, and W. don't much affect our Dutch determinations. I dine with him on Thursday, provided *l'oncle* is not dined upon, or peremptorily bespoke by the posthumous epicures before that day. I wish he may recover — not for *our* dinner's sake, but to disappoint the undertaker, and the rascally reptiles that may well wait, since they *will* dine at last.

"Gell called — he of Troy — after I was out. Mem. — to return his visit. But my Mems. are the very landmarks of forgetfulness; something like a lighthouse, with a ship wrecked under the nose of its lantern. I never look at a Mem. with-

out seeing that I have remembered to forget. Mem. — I have forgotten to pay Pitt's taxes, and suppose I shall be surcharged. 'An I do not turn rebel when thou art king' — oons! I believe my very biscuit is leavened with that impostor's imposts.

"Ly. Me. returns from Jersey's to-morrow; I must call. A Mr. Thomson has sent a song which I must applaud. I hate annoying them with censure or silence, — and yet I hate *lettering*.

"Saw Lord Glenbervie and his prospectus, at Murray's, of a new 'Treatise on Timber.' Now here is a man more useful than all the historians and rhymers ever planted. For, by preserving our woods and forests, he furnishes materials for all the history of Britain worth reading, and all the odes worth nothing.

"Redde a good deal, but desultorily. My head is crammed with the most useless lumber. It is odd that when I do read, I can only bear the chicken broth of — *anything* but novels. It is many a year since I looked into one (though they are sometimes ordered, by way of experiment, but never taken), till I looked yesterday at the worst parts of the Monk. These descriptions ought to have been written by Tiberius at Caprea — they are forced — the *philtred* ideas of a jaded voluptuary. It is to me inconceivable how they could have been composed by a man of only twenty — his age when he wrote them. They have no

nature — all the sour cream of cantharides. I should have suspected Buffon of writing them on the death-bed of his detestable dotage. I had never redde this edition, and merely looked at them from curiosity and recollection of the noise they made, and the name they have left to Lewis. But they could do no harm, except . . .

"Called this evening on my agent — my business as usual. Our strange adventures are the only inheritances of our family that have not diminished.

"I shall now smoke two cigars, and get me to bed. The cigars don't keep well here. They get as old as a *donna di quaranti anni* in the sun of Africa. The Havannah are the best, — but neither are so pleasant as a hooka or chibouque. The Turkish tobacco is mild, and their horses entire — two things as they should be. I am so far obliged to this journal, that it preserves me from verse — at least from keeping it. I have just thrown a poem into the fire (which it has relighted to my great comfort), and have smoked out of my head the plan of another. I wish I could as easily get rid of thinking, or, at least, the confusion of thought.

"Tuesday, December 7.

"Went to bed, and slept dreamlessly, but not refreshingly. Awoke, and up an hour before being called; but dawdled three hours in dressing. When one subtracts from life infancy (which is

vegetation) — sleep, eating, and swilling — buttonning and unbuttoning — how much remains of downright existence? The summer of a dormouse.

"Redde the papers and *tea*-ed and soda-watered, and found out that the fire was badly lighted. Ld. Glenbervie wants me to go to Brighton — um!

"This morning, a very pretty billet from the Staël about meeting her at Ld. H.'s to-morrow. She has written, I dare say, twenty such this morning to different people, all equally flattering to each. So much the better for her and those who believe all she wishes them, or they wish to believe. She has been pleased to be pleased with my slight eulogy in the note annexed to 'The Bride.' This is to be accounted for in several ways, — firstly, all women like all, or any, praise; secondly, this was unexpected, because I have never courted her; and, thirdly, as Scrub says, those who have been all their lives regularly praised, by regular critics, like a little variety, and are glad when any one goes out of his way to say a civil thing; and, fourthly, she is a very good-natured creature, which is the best reason, after all, and, perhaps, the only one.

"A knock — knocks single and double. Bland called. He says Dutch society (he has been in Holland) is second-hand French; but the women are like women everywhere else. This is a bore;

I should like to see them a little *un*like; but that can't be expected.

"Went out — came home — this, that, and the other — and 'all is vanity, saith the preacher,' and so say I, as part of his congregation. Talking of vanity, whose praise do I prefer? Why, Mrs. Inchbald's, and that of the Americans. The first, because her 'Simple Story' and 'Nature and Art' are, to me, *true* to their *titles;* and, consequently, her short note to Rogers about 'The Giaour' delighted me more than anything, except the *Edinburgh Review.* I like the Americans, bccause *I* happened to be in *Asia*, while the 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' were redde in *America.* If I could have had a speech against the *Slave Trade*, *in Africa*, and an epitaph on a dog in *Europe* (*i. e.* in the *Morning Post*), my *vertex sublimis* would certainly have displaced stars enough to overthrow the Newtonian system.

"Friday, December 10, 1813.

"I am *ennuyé* beyond my usual tense of that yawning verb, which I am always conjugating; and I don't find that society much mends the matter. I am too lazy to shoot myself — and it would annoy Augusta, and perhaps ———, but it would be a good thing for George, on the other side, and no bad one for me; but I won't be tempted.

"I have had the kindest letter from M——e. I *do* think that man is the best-hearted, the only

hearted being I ever encountered; and, then, his talents are equal to his feelings.

"Dined on Wednesday at Lord H.'s — the Staffords, Staëls, Cowpers, Ossulstones, Melbournes, Mackintoshes, etc. — and was introduced to the Marquis and Marchioness of Stafford, — an unexpected event. My quarrel with Lord Carlisle (their or his brother-in-law) having rendered it improper, I suppose, brought it about. But, if it was to happen at all, I wonder it did not occur before. She is handsome, and must have been beautiful — and her manners are *princessly*.

"The Staël was at the other end of the table, and less loquacious than heretofore. We are now very good friends; though she asked Lady Melbourne whether I had really any *bonhommie*. She might as well have asked that question before she told C. L. 'c'est un démon.' True enough, but rather premature, for *she* could not have found it out, and so — she wants me to dine there next Sunday.

"Murray prospers, as far as circulation. For my part, I adhere (in liking) to my Fragment. It is no wonder that I wrote one — my mind is a fragment.

"Saw Lord Gower, Tierney, etc., in the square. Took leave of Lord Gr. who is going to Holland and Germany. He tells me that he carries with him a parcel of 'Harolds' and 'Giaours,' etc., for the readers of Berlin, who, it seems, read English, and have taken a caprice for mine. Um! — have

I been *German* all this time, when I thought myself *Oriental?*

"Lent Tierney my box for to-morrow; and received a new comedy sent by Lady C. A. — but *not hers.* I must read it, and endeavour not to displease the author. I hate annoying them with cavil; but a comedy I take to be the most difficult of compositions, more so than tragedy.

"G——t says there is a coincidence between the first part of 'The Bride' and some story of his — whether published or not, I know not, never having seen it. He is almost the last person on whom any one would commit literary larceny, and I am not conscious of any *witting* thefts on any of the genus. As to originality, all pretensions are ludicrous, — 'there is nothing new under the sun.'

"Went last night to the play. Invited out to a party, but did not go, — right. Refused to go to Lady ———'s on Monday; — right again. If I must fritter away my life, I would rather do it alone. I was much tempted; C—— looked so Turkish with her red turban, and her regular, dark, and clear features. Not that *she* and *I* ever were, or could be, anything; but I love any aspect that reminds me of the 'children of the sun.'

"To dine to-day with Rogers and Sharpe, for which I have some appetite, not having tasted food for the preceding forty-eight hours. I wish I could leave off eating altogether.

"Saturday, December 11.

"Sunday, December 12.

"By G——t's answer, I find it is some story in *real life*, and not any work with which my late composition coincides. It is still more singular, for mine is drawn from *existence* also.

"I have sent an excuse to M. de Staël. I do not feel sociable enough for dinner to-day; and I will not go to Sheridan's on Wednesday. Not that I do not admire and prefer his unequalled conversation; but — that '*but*' must only be intelligible to thoughts I cannot write. Sheridan was in good talk at Rogers's the other night, but I only stayed till *nine*. All the world are to be at the Staël's to-night, and I am not sorry to escape any part of it. I only go out to get me a fresh appetite for being alone. Went out — did not go to the Staël's but to Ld. Holland's. Party numerous — conversation general. Stayed late — made a blunder — got over it — came home and went to bed, not having eaten. Rather empty, but *fresco*, which is the great point with me.

"Monday, Dec. 13, 1813.

"Called at three places — read, and got ready to leave town to-morrow. Murray has had a letter from his brother bibliopole of Edinburgh, who says, 'he is lucky in having such a *poet*' — something as if one was a pack-horse, or 'ass, or anything

that is his;' or, like Mrs. Packwood, who replied to some inquiry after the 'Odes on Razors,' 'Laws, sir, we keeps a poet.' The same illustrious Edinburgh bookseller once sent an order for books, poesy, and cookery, with this agreeable postscript, — 'The "Harold" and "Cookery" are much wanted.' Such is fame, and, after all, quite as good as any other 'life in other's breath.' 'Tis much the same to divide purchasers with Hannah Glasse or Hannah More.

"Some editor of some magazine has *announced* to Murray his intention of abusing the thing '*without reading it.*' So much the better; if he redde it first, he would abuse it more.

"Allen (Lord Holland's Allen — the best informed and one of the ablest men I know — a perfect Magliabecchi — a devourer, a Helluo of books, and an observer of men) has lent me a quantity of Burns's unpublished, and never-to-be published, letters. They are full of oaths and obscene songs. What an antithetical mind! — tenderness, roughness — delicacy, coarseness — sentiment, sensuality — soaring and grovelling, dirt and deity — all mixed up in that one compound of inspired clay!

"It seems strange; a true voluptuary will never abandon his mind to the grossness of reality. It is by exalting the earthly, the material, the *physique* of our pleasures, by veiling these ideas, by forgetting them altogether, or, at least, never naming

them hardly to one's self, that we alone can prevent them from disgusting.

"December 14, 15, 16.

"Much done, but nothing to record. It is quite enough to set down my thoughts, — my actions will rarely bear retrospection.

"December 17, 18.

"Lord Holland told me a curious piece of sentimentality in Sheridan.[69] The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions on him and other *hommes marquans*, and mine was this: 'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy ("School for Scandal"), the *best* drama (in my mind, far before that St. Giles's lampoon, the "Beggar's Opera,") the best farce (the "Critic"— it is only too good for a farce), and the best address (Monologue on Garrick), and, to crown all, delivered the very best oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.' Somebody told S. this the next day, and on hearing it, he burst into tears!

"Poor Brinsley! if they were tears of pleasure, I would rather have said these few, but most sincere, words than have written the Iliad or made his own celebrated philippic. Nay, his own comedy never gratified me more than to hear that

he had derived a moment's gratification from any praise of mine, humble as it must appear to 'my elders and my betters.'

"Went to my box at Covent Garden to-night; and my delicacy felt a little shocked at seeing S——'s mistress (who, to my certain knowledge, was actually educated from her birth for her profession), sitting with her mother, 'a three-piled b——d, b——d-major to the army,' in a private box opposite. I felt rather indignant; but, casting my eyes around the house, in the next box to me, and the next, and the next, were the most distinguished old and young Babylonians of quality; so I burst out a-laughing. It was really odd; Lady ———, *divorced*; Lady ——— and her daughter, Lady ———, both *divorceable*; Mrs. ———,[70] in the next, the *like*, and still nearer . . . ! What an assemblage to *me*, who know all their histories. It was as if the house had been divided between your public and your *understood* courtesans; but the intriguantes much outnumbered the regular mercenaries. On the other side were only Pauline and *her* mother, and, next box to her, three of inferior note. Now, where lay the difference between *her* and *mamma*, and Lady ——— and daughter? except that the two last may enter Carlton and any *other house*, and the two first are limited to the opera and b—— house. How I do delight in observing life as it really is! — and myself, after all, the worst of any. But no matter —

I must avoid egotism, which, just now, would be no vanity.

"I have lately written a wild, rambling, unfinished rhapsody, called 'The Devil's Drive,'[71] the notion of which I took from Porson's 'Devil's Walk.'

"Redde some Italian, and wrote two sonnets on ———. I never wrote but one sonnet before, and that was not in earnest, and many years ago, as an exercise — and I will never write another. They are the most puling, petrifying, stupidly platonic compositions. I detest the Petrarch so much,[72] that I would not be the man even to have obtained his Laura, which the metaphysical, whining dotard never could.

"January 16, 1814.

"To-morrow I leave town for a few days. I saw Lewis to-day, who is just returned from Oatlands, where he has been squabbling with Mad. de Staël about himself, 'Clarissa Harlowe,' Mackintosh, and me. My homage has never been paid in that quarter, or we would have agreed still worse. I don't talk — I can't flatter, and won't listen, except to a pretty or a foolish woman. She bored Lewis with praises of himself till he sickened — found out that 'Clarissa' was perfection, and Mackintosh the first man in England. There I agree, at least *one* of the first — but Lewis did not. As to 'Clarissa,' I leave to those who can read it to judge and dispute. I could not do the one, and am, con-

sequently, not qualified for the other. She told Lewis wisely, he being my friend, that I was affected, in the first place; and that, in the next place, I committed the heinous offence of sitting at dinner with my *eyes* shut, or half shut. I wonder if I really have this trick. I must cure myself of it, if true. One insensibly acquires awkward habits, which should be broken in time. If this is one, I wish I had been told of it before. It would not so much signify if one was always to be checkmated by a plain woman, but one may as well see some of one's neighbours, as well as the plate upon the table.

"I should like, of all things, to have heard the Amabæan eclogue between her and Lewis — both obstinate, clever, odd, garrulous, and shrill. In fact, one could have heard nothing else. But they fell out, alas! — and now they will never quarrel again. Could not one reconcile them for the 'nonce?' Poor Corinne — she will find that some of her fine sayings won't suit our fine ladies and gentlemen.

"I am getting rather into admiration of ———, the youngest sister of ———. A wife would be my salvation. I am sure the wives of my acquaintances have hitherto done me little good. ——— is beautiful, but very young, and, I think, a fool. But I have not seen enough to judge; besides, I hate an *esprit* in petticoats. That she won't love me is very probable, nor shall I love her. But, on

my system, and the modern system in general, that don't signify. The business (if it came to business) would probably be arranged between papa and me. She would have her own way; I am good-humoured to women, and docile; and, if I did not fall in love with her, which I should try to prevent, we should be a very comfortable couple. As to conduct, *that* she must look to. But *if* I love, I shall be jealous; and for that reason I will not be in love. Though, after all, I doubt my temper, and fear I should not be so patient as becomes the *bienséance* of a married man in my station. Divorce ruins the poor *femme*, and damages are a paltry compensation. I do fear my temper would lead me into some of our Oriental tricks of vengeance, or, at any rate, into a summary appeal to the court of twelve paces. So 'I'll none on't,' but e'en remain single and solitary; though I should like to have somebody now and then to yawn with one.

"W., and, after him, ———, has stolen one of my buffooneries about Mde. de Staël's 'Metaphysics and the Fog,' and passed it, by speech and letter, as their own. As Gibbet says, 'they are the most of a gentleman of any on the road.' W. is in sad enmity with the Whigs about this review of Fox (if he *did* review him); all the epigrammatists and essayists are at him. I hate *odds*, and wish he may beat them. As for me, by the blessing of indifference, I have simplified my politics

into an utter detestation of all existing governments; and, as it is the shortest and most agreeable and summary feeling imaginable, the first moment of a universal republic would convert me into an advocate for single and uncontradicted despotism. The fact is, riches are power, and poverty is slavery all over the earth, and one sort of establishment is no better nor worse for a *people* than another. I shall adhere to my party, because it would not be honourable to act otherwise; but, as to *opinions*, I don't think politics *worth* an *opinion*. *Conduct* is another thing; if you begin with a party, go on with them. I have no consistency, except in politics; and *that* probably arises from my indifference on the subject altogether."

I must here be permitted to interrupt, for a while, the progress of this journal, — which extends through some months of the succeeding year, — for the purpose of noticing, without infringement of chronological order, such parts of the poet's literary history and correspondence as belong properly to the date of the year 1813.

At the beginning, as we have seen, of the month of December, "The Bride of Abydos" was published, — having been struck off, like its predecessor, "The Giaour," in one of those paroxysms of passion and imagination, which adventures such as the poet was now engaged in were, in a temperament

like his, calculated to excite. As the mathematician of old required but a spot to stand upon, to be able, as he boasted, to move the world, so a certain degree of foundation in *fact* seemed necessary to Byron, before that lever which he knew how to apply to the world of the passions could be wielded by him. So small, however, was, in many instances, the connection with reality which satisfied him, that to aim at tracing through his stories these links with his own fate and fortunes, which were, after all, perhaps, visible but to his own fancy, would be a task as uncertain as unsafe; and this remark applies not only to "The Bride of Abydos," but to "The Corsair," "Lara," and all the other beautiful fictions that followed, in which, though the emotions expressed by the poet may be, in general, regarded as vivid recollections of what had at different times agitated his own bosom, there are but little grounds — however he might himself, occasionally, encourage such a supposition — for connecting him personally with the groundwork or incidents of the stories.

While yet uncertain about the fate of his own new poem, the following observations on the work of an ingenious follower in the same track were written.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Dec. 4, 1813.

"I have redde through your 'Persian Tales,'[73] and have taken the liberty of making some remarks

on the *blank* pages. There are many beautiful passages, and an interesting story; and I cannot give you a stronger proof that such is my opinion, than by the *date* of the *hour — two o'clock*, till which it has kept me awake *without a yawn*. The conclusion is not quite correct in *costume:* there is no *Mussulman suicide* on record — at least for *love*. But this matters not. The tale must have been written by some one who has been on the spot, and I wish him, and he deserves, success. Will you apologise to the author for the liberties I have taken with his MS.? Had I been less awake to, and interested in, his theme, I had been less obtrusive; but you know *I* always take this in good part, and I hope he will. It is difficult to say what *will* succeed, and still more to pronounce what *will not*. *I* am at this moment in *that uncertainty* (on our *own* score); and it is no small proof of the author's powers to be able to *charm* and *fix* a *mind's* attention on similar subjects and climates in such a predicament. That he may have the same effect upon all his readers is very sincerely the wish, and hardly the *doubt*, of yours truly, B."

To "The Bride of Abydos" he made additions, in the course of printing, amounting altogether, to near two hundred lines; and, as usual, among the passages thus added, were some of the happiest and most brilliant in the whole poem. The opening lines — "Know ye the land," etc., supposed to

have been suggested to him by a song of Goethe's [74] — were among the number of those new insertions, as were also those fine verses, — "Who hath not proved how feebly words essay," etc. Of one of the most popular lines in this latter passage, it is not only curious, but instructive, to trace the progress to its present state of finish. Having at first written —

"Mind on her lip and music in her face,"

he afterward altered it to —

"The mind of music breathing in her face."

But this not satisfying him, the next step of correction brought the line to what it is at present:

"The mind, the music breathing from her face." [75]

But the longest, as well as most splendid, of those passages, with which the perusal of his own strains, during revision, inspired him, was that rich flow of eloquent feeling which follows the couplet, — "Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my bark," etc., — a strain of poetry, which, for energy and tenderness of thought, for music of versification, and selectness of diction, has, throughout the greater portion of it, but few rivals in either ancient or modern song. All this passage was sent, in successive scraps, to the printer, — correction following correction, and thought reinforced by thought.

We have here, too, another example of that retouching process by which some of his most exquisite effects were attained. Every reader remembers the four beautiful lines:

> "Or, since that hope denied in worlds of strife,
> Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
> The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
> And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!"

In the first copy of this passage sent to the publisher, the last line was written thus, —

"And tints to-morrow with { *an airy* / a fancied } ray;" —

the following note being annexed: "Mr. Murray, — Choose which of the two epithets, 'fancied,' or 'airy,' may be the best; or, if neither will do, tell me, and I will dream another." The poet's dream was, it must be owned, lucky, — "prophetic" being the word, of all others, for his purpose.[76]

I shall select but one more example, from the additions to this poem, as a proof that his eagerness and facility in producing was sometimes almost equalled by his anxious care in correcting. In the long passage just referred to, the six lines beginning "Blest as the Muezzin's strain," etc., having been despatched to the printer too late for insertion, were, by his desire, added in an errata page; the first couplet in its original form, being as follows:

"Soft as the Mecca-Muezzin's strains invite
Him who hath journeyed far to join the rite."

In a few hours after, another scrap was sent off, containing the lines thus:

"Blest as the Muezzin's strains from Mecca's dome,
Which welcomes Faith to view her Prophet's tomb;"

with the following note to Mr. Murray:

"December 3, 1813.

"Look out in the encyclopedia, article *Mecca*, whether it is there or at *Medina* the Prophet is entombed. If at Medina, the first lines of my alteration must run:

"Blest as the call which from Medina's dome
Invites Devotion to her Prophet's tomb, etc.

If at Mecca, the lines may stand as before. Page 45, Canto 2d, 'Bride of Abydos.' Yours, B.

"You will find this out either by article *Mecca*, *Medina*, or *Mohammed*. I have no book of reference by me."

Immediately after succeeded another note:

"Did you look out? Is it *Medina* or *Mecca* that contains the *Holy* Sepulchre? Don't make me blaspheme by your negligence. I have no book of

reference, or I would save you the trouble. I *blush*, as a good Mussulman, to have confused the point.

"Yours, B."

Notwithstanding all these various changes, the couplet in question stands at present thus:

> "Blest as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wall
> To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call."

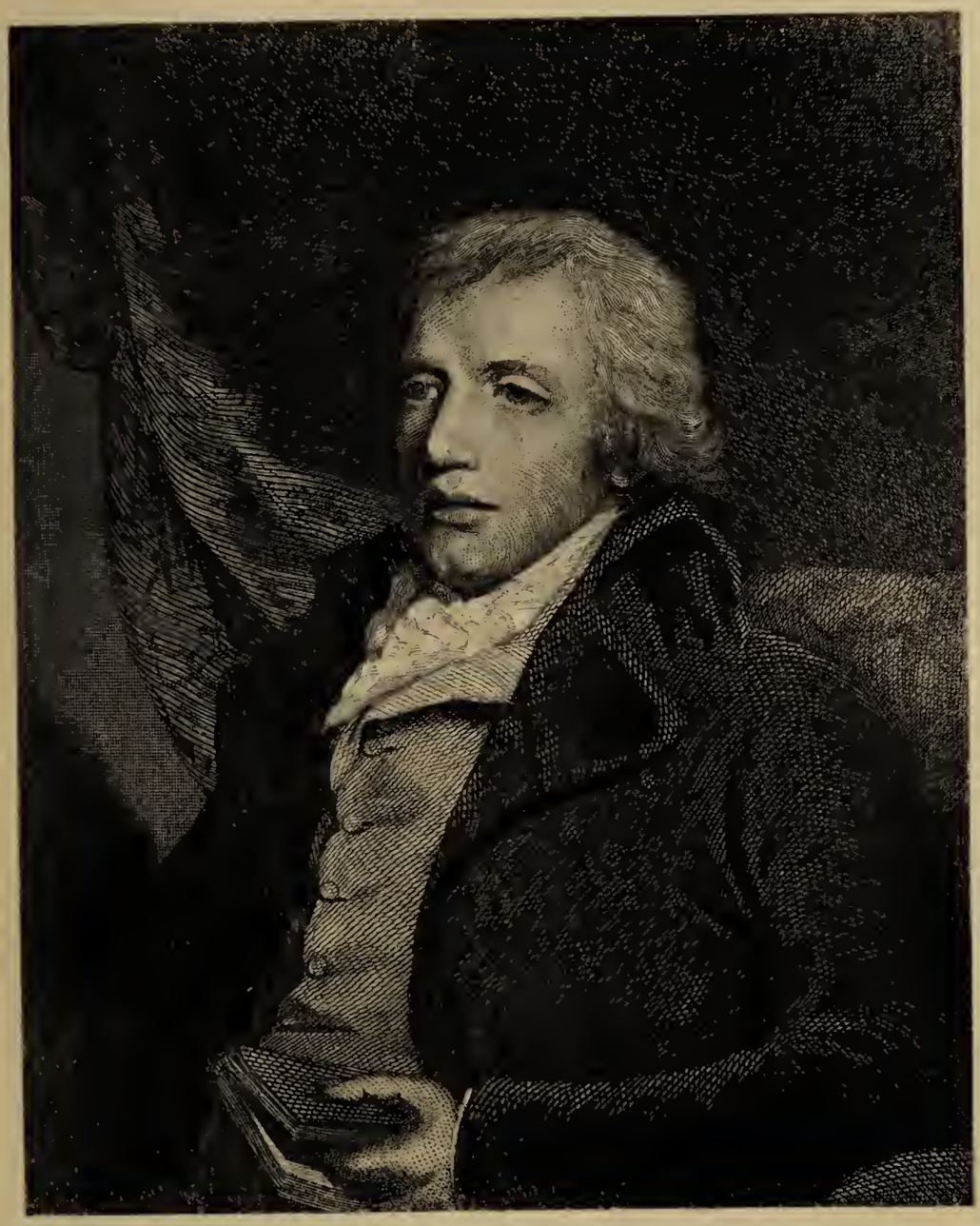
In addition to his own watchfulness over the birth of his new poem, he also, as will be seen from the following letter, invoked the veteran taste of Mr. Gifford on the occasion.

TO MR. GIFFORD.

"November 12, 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR: — I hope you will consider, when I venture on any request, that it is the reverse of a certain dedication, and is addressed, *not* to 'The Editor of the *Quarterly Review*,' but to Mr. Gifford. You will understand this, and on that point I need trouble you no farther.

"You have been good enough to look at a thing of mine in MS. — a Turkish story, and I should feel gratified if you would do it the same favour in its probationary state of printing. It was written, I cannot say for amusement, nor 'obliged by hunger and request of friends,' but in a state of mind from circumstances which occasionally occur to 'us youth,' that rendered it necessary for me to apply



my mind to something, anything but reality; and under this not very brilliant inspiration it was composed. Being done, and having at least diverted me from myself, I thought you would not perhaps be offended if Mr. Murray forwarded it to you. He has done so, and to apologise for his doing so a second time is the object of my present letter.

"I beg you will *not* send me any answer. I assure you very sincerely I know your time to be occupied, and it is enough, more than enough, if you read; you are not to be bored with the fatigue of answers.

"A word to Mr. Murray will be sufficient, and send it either to the flames or —

> "A hundred hawkers' load,
> On wings of wind to fly or fall abroad.

It deserves no better than the first, as the work of a week, and scribbled 'stans pede in uno' (by the by, the only foot I have to stand on); and I promise never to trouble you again under forty cantos, and a voyage between each. Believe me ever

"Your obliged and affectionate servant,

"Byron."

The following letters and notes, addressed to Mr. Murray at this time, cannot fail, I think, to gratify all those to whom the history of the labours of genius is interesting:

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 12, 1813.

"Two friends of mine (Mr. Rogers and Mr. Sharpe) have advised me not to risk at present any single publication separately, for various reasons. As they have not seen the one in question, they can have no bias for or against the merits (if it has any) or the faults of the present subject of our conversation. You say all the last of 'The Giaour' are gone — at least out of your hands. Now, if you think of publishing any new edition with the last additions which have not yet been before the reader (I mean distinct from the two-volume publication), we can add 'The Bride of Abydos,' which will thus steal quietly into the world: if liked, we can then throw off some copies for the purchasers of former 'Giaours;' and, if not, I can omit it in any future publication. What think you? I really am no judge of those things, and with all my natural partiality for one's own productions, I would rather follow any one's judgment than my own.

"P. S. Pray let me have the proofs I sent *all* to-night. I have some alterations that I have thought of that I wish to make speedily. I hope the proof will be on separate pages, and not all huddled together on a mile-long ballad-singing sheet, as those of 'The Giaour' sometimes are; for then I can't read them distinctly."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 13, 1813.

"Will you forward the letter to Mr. Gifford with the proof? There is an alteration I may make in Zuleika's speech, in second canto (the only one of *hers* in that canto). It is now thus:

"And curse, if I could curse, the day.

It must be:

"And mourn — I dare not curse — the day
That saw my solitary birth, etc.

"Ever yours, B.

"In the last MS. lines sent, instead of 'living heart,' convert to 'quivering heart.' It is in line ninth of the MS. passage.

"Ever yours again, B."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Alteration of a line in Canto second.

"Instead of —

"And tints to-morrow with a *fancied* ray,

Print —

"And tints to-morrow with *prophetic* ray.

"The evening beam that smiles the clouds away
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray;

Or, —

"And { *gilds* / tints } the hope of morning with its ray;

Or, —

"And gilds to-morrow's hope with heavenly ray.

"I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford which of them is best, or rather *not worst*. Ever, etc.

"You can send the request contained in this at the same time with the *revise*, *after* I have seen the *said revise*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 13, 1813.

"Certainly. Do you suppose that no one but the Galileans are acquainted with *Adam*, and *Eve*, and *Cain*,[77] and *Noah?* — Surely, I might have had Solomon, and Abraham, and David, and even Moses. When you known that *Zuleika* is the *Persian poetical* name for *Potiphar's* wife, on whom and Joseph there is a long poem, in the Persian, this will not surprise you. If you want authority, look at Jones, D'Herbelot, Vathek, or the notes to the 'Arabian Nights;' and, if you think it necessary, model this into a note.

"Alter, in the inscription, 'the most affectionate respect,' to 'with every sentiment of regard and respect.'"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 14, 1813.

"I send you a note for the *ignorant*, but I really wonder at finding *you* among them. I don't care

one lump of sugar for my *poetry;* but for my *costume* and my *correctness* on those points (of which I think the *funeral* was a proof), I will combat lustily.

"Yours," etc.

"Nov. 14, 1813.

"Let the revise which I sent just now (and *not* the proof in Mr. Gifford's possession) be returned to the printer, as there are several additional corrections, and two new lines in it. Yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 15, 1813.

"Mr. Hodgson has looked over and *stopped*, or rather *pointed*, this revise, which must be the one to print from. He has also made some suggestions, with most of which I have complied, as he has always, for these ten years, been a very sincere, and by no means (at times) flattering intimate of mine. *He* likes it (you will think *flatteringly*, in this instance) better than 'The Giaour,' but doubts (and so do I) its being so popular; but, contrary to some others, advises a separate publication. On this we can easily decide. I confess I like the *double* form better. Hodgson says, it is *better versified* than any of the others; which is odd, if true, as it has cost me less time (though more hours at a time) than any attempt I ever made.

"P. S. Do attend to the punctuation: I can't, for I don't know a comma — at least where to place one.

"That Tory of a printer has omitted two lines of the opening, and *perhaps more*, which were in the MS. Will you, pray, give him a hint of accuracy? I have reinserted the *two*, but they were in the manuscript, I can swear."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 17, 1813.

"That you and I may distinctly understand each other on a subject, which, like 'the dreadful reckoning when men smile no more,' makes conversation not very pleasant, I think it as well to *write* a few lines on the topic. Before I left town for Yorkshire, you said that you were ready and willing to give five hundred guineas for the copyright of 'The Giaour;' and my answer was — from which I do not mean to recede — that we would discuss the point at Christmas. The new story may or may not succeed; the probability, under present circumstances, seems to be, that it may at least pay its expenses — but even that remains to be proved, and till it is proved one way or another, we will say nothing about it. Thus then be it: I will postpone all arrangement about it, and 'The Giaour' also, till Easter, 1814; and you shall then, according to your own notions of fairness, make your own offer for the two. At the same time, I do not rate the

last in my own estimation at half 'The Giaour;' and according to your own notions of its worth and its success within the time mentioned, be the addition or deduction to or from whatever sum may be your proposal for the first, which has already had its success.

"The pictures of Phillips I consider as *mine*, all three; and the one (not the Arnaout) of the two best is much at *your service*, if you will accept it as a present.

"P. S. The expense of engraving from the miniature send me in my account, as it was destroyed by my desire; and have the goodness to burn that detestable print from it immediately.

"To make you some amends for eternally pestering you with alterations, I send you Cobbett to confirm your orthodoxy.

"One more alteration of *a* into *the* in the MS.; it must be — 'The *heart whose softness*,' etc.

"Remember — and in the inscription, 'To the Right Honourable Lord Holland,' *without* the previous names, Henry," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 20, 1813.

"More work for the *Row*. I am doing my best to beat 'The Giaour' — *no* difficult task for any one but the author."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 22, 1813.

"I have no time to *cross*-investigate, but I believe and hope all is right. I care less than you will believe about its success, but I can't survive a single *misprint:* it *chokes* me to see words misused by the printers. Pray look over, in case of some eyesore escaping me.

"P. S. Send the earliest copies to Mr. Frere, Mr. Canning, Mr. Heber, Mr. Gifford, Lord Holland, Lord Melbourne (Whitehall), Lady Caroline Lamb (Brocket), Mr. Hodgson (Cambridge), Mr. Merivale, Mr. Ward, from the author."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 23, 1813.

"You wanted some reflections and I send you *per Selim* (see his speech in Canto 2d, page 46), eighteen lines in decent couplets, of a pensive, if not an *ethical* tendency. One more revise — positively the last if decently done — at any rate the *pen*ultimate. Mr. Canning's approbation (*if* he did approve) I need not say makes me proud.[78] As to printing, print as you will and how you will — by itself, if you like; but let me have a few copies in *sheets*."

"November 24, 1813.

"You must pardon me once more, as it is all for your good: it must be thus:

"He makes a solitude, and calls it peace.

'*Makes*' is closer to the passage of Tacitus, from which the line is taken, and is, besides, a stronger word than '*leaves*.'

"Mark where his carnage and his conquests cease —
He makes a solitude, and calls it — peace."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 27, 1813.

"If you look over this carefully by the *last proof* with my corrections, it is probably right; this *you* can *do* as well or better; — I have not now time. The copies I mentioned to be sent to different friends last night, I should wish to be made up with the new 'Giaours,' if it also is ready. If not, send 'The Giaour' afterward.

"The *Morning Post* says *I* am the author of 'Nourjahad!' This comes of lending the drawings for their dresses; but it is not worth a *formal contradiction*. Besides, the criticisms on the *supposition* will, some of them, be quite amusing and furious. The *Orientalism* — which I hear is very splendid — of the melodrame (whosever it is, and I am sure I don't know) is as good as an advertise-

ment for your 'Eastern Stories,' by filling their heads with glitter.

"P. S. You will of course *say* the truth, that I am *not* the melodramist — if any one charges me in your presence with the performance."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 28, 1813.

"Send another copy (if not too much of a request) to Lady Holland of the 'Journal,'[79] in my name, when you receive this; it is for *Earl Grey* — and I will relinquish my *own*. Also to Mr. Sharpe, and Lady Holland, and Lady Caroline Lamb, copies of 'The Bride' as soon as convenient.

"P. S. Mr. Ward and myself still continue our purpose; but I shall not trouble you on any arrangement on the score of 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride' till our return, — or, at any rate, before *May*, 1814, — that is, six months from hence: and before that time you will be able to ascertain how far your offer may be a losing one; if so, you can deduct proportionably; and if not, I shall not at any rate allow you to go higher than your present proposal, which is very handsome, and more than fair.[80]

"I have had — but this must be *entre nous* — a very kind note, on the subject of 'The Bride,'

from Sir James Mackintosh, and an invitation to go there this evening, which it is now too late to accept."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 29, 1813.

"Sunday — Monday morning — three o'clock — in my doublet and hose, — *swearing*.

"I send you in time an errata page, containing an omission of mine, which must be thus added, as it is too late for insertion in the text. The passage is an imitation altogether from Medea in Ovid, and is incomplete without these two lines. Pray let this be done, and directly; it is necessary, will add one page to your book (*making*), and can do no harm, and is yet in time for the *public*. Answer me, thou oracle, in the affirmative. You can send the loose pages to those who have copies already, if they like; but certainly to all the *critical* copyholders.

"P. S. I have got out of my bed (in which, however, I could not sleep, whether I had amended this or not), and so good morning. I am trying whether De l'Allemagne will act as an opiate, but I doubt it."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 29, 1813.

"'*You have looked at it!*' to much purpose, to allow so stupid a blunder to stand; it is *not*

'*courage*' but '*carnage;*' and if you don't want me to cut my own throat, see it altered.

"I am very sorry to hear of the fall of Dresden."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 29, 1813, Monday.

"You will act as you please upon that point; but whether I go or stay, I shall not say another word on the subject till May — nor then, unless quite convenient to yourself. I have many things I wish to leave to your care, principally papers. The *vases* need not be now sent, as Mr. Ward is gone to Scotland. You are right about the errata page; place it at the beginning. Mr. Perry is a little premature in his compliments: these may do harm by exciting expectation, and I think we ought to be above it — though I see the next paragraph is on the 'Journal,'[81] which makes me suspect *you* as the author of both.

"Would it not have been as well to have said 'in two cantos' in the advertisement? they will else think of *fragments*, a species of composition very well for *once*, like *one ruin* in a *view;* but one would not build a town of them. 'The Bride,' such as it is, is my first *entire* composition of any length (except the Satire, and be d——d to it), for 'The Giaour' is but a string of passages, and 'Childe Harold' is, and I rather think always will be, unconcluded. I return Mr. Hay's note, with thanks to him and you.

"There have been some epigrams on Mr. Ward: one I see to-day. The first I did not see, but heard yesterday. The second seems very bad. I only hope that Mr. Ward does not believe that I had any connection with either. I like and value him too well to allow my politics to contract into spleen, or to admire anything intended to annoy him or his. You need not take the trouble to answer this, as I shall see you in the course of the afternoon.

"P. S. I have said this much about the epigrams, because I lived so much in the *opposite camp*, and, from my post as an engineer, might be suspected as the flinger of these hand-grenadoes; but with a worthy foe, I am all for open war, and not this bush-fighting, and have not had, nor will have, anything to do with it. I do not know the author."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 30, 1813.

"Print this at the end of *all that is of* '*The Bride of Abydos*,' as an errata page. BN.

"Omitted, Canto 2d, page 47, after line 449,

"So that those arms cling closer round my neck.

Read:

"Then if my lip once murmur, it must be
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Tuesday evening, Nov. 30, 1813.

"For the sake of correctness, particularly in an errata page, the alteration of the couplet I have just sent (half an hour ago) must take place, in spite of delay or cancel; let me see the *proof* early to-morrow. I found out *murmur* to be a neuter *verb*, and have been obliged to alter the line so as to make it a substantive, thus:

> "The deepest murmur of this lip shall be
> No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!

Don't send the copies to the *country* till this is all right."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Dec. 2, 1813.

"When you can, let the couplet enclosed be inserted either in the page, or in the errata page. I trust it is in time for some of the copies. This alteration is in the same part — the page *but one* before the last correction sent.

"P. S. I am afraid, from all I hear, that people are rather inordinate in their expectations, which is very unlucky, but cannot now be helped. This comes of Mr. Perry and one's wise friends; but do not *you* wind *your* hopes of success to the same pitch, for fear of accidents, and I can assure you

that my philosophy will stand the test very fairly; and I have done everything to ensure you, at all events, from positive loss, which will be some satisfaction to both."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Dec. 3, 1813.

"I send you a *scratch* or *two*, the which *heal.* The *Christian Observer* is very savage, but certainly well written — and quite uncomfortable at the naughtiness of book and author. I rather suspect you won't much like the *present* to be more moral, if it is to share also the usual fate of your virtuous volumes.

"Let me see a proof of the *six* before incorporation."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Monday evening, Dec. 6, 1813.

"It is all very well, except that the lines are not numbered properly, and a diabolical mistake, page 67, which *must* be corrected with the *pen*, if no other way remains; it is the omission of '*not*' before '*disagreeable*,' in the *note* on the *amber* rosary. This is really horrible, and nearly as bad as the stumble of mine at the threshold — I mean the *misnomer* of 'Bride.' Pray do not let a copy go without the '*not;*' it is nonsense, and worse than nonsense as it now stands. I wish the printer was saddled with a vampire.

"P. S. It is still *hath* instead of *have* in page 20; never was any one so *misused* as I am by your devils of printers.

"P. S. I hope and trust the '*not*' was inserted in the first edition. We must have something — anything — to set it right. It is enough to answer for one's own bulls, without other people's."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 27, 1813.

"Lord Holland is laid up with the gout, and would feel very much obliged if you could obtain, and send as soon as possible, Madame d'Arblay's (or even Miss Edgeworth's) new work. I know they are not out; but it is perhaps possible for your *Majesty* to command what we cannot with much suing purchase, as yet. I need not say that when you are able or willing to confer the same favour on me, I shall be obliged. I would almost fall sick myself to get at Madame d'Arblay's writings.

"P. S. You were talking to-day of the American edition of a certain unquenchable memorial of my younger days. As it can't be helped now, I own I have some curiosity to see a copy of trans-Atlantic typography. This you will perhaps obtain, and one for yourself; but I must beg that you will not *import more*, because, *seriously*, I *do wish*

to have that thing forgotten as much as it has been forgiven.

"If you send to the *Globe* editor, say that I want neither excuse nor contradiction, but merely a discontinuance of a most ill-grounded charge. I never was consistent in anything but my politics; and as my redemption depends on that solitary virtue, it is murder to carry away my last anchor."

Of these hasty and characteristic missives with which he despatched off his "still breeding thoughts," there yet remain a few more that might be presented to the reader; but enough has here been given to show the fastidiousness of his self criticism, as well as the restless and unsatisfied ardour with which he pressed on in pursuit of perfection, — still seeing, according to the usual doom of genius, much farther than he could reach.

An appeal was, about this time, made to his generosity, which the reputation of the person from whom it proceeded would, in the minds of most people, have justified him in treating with disregard, but which a more enlarged feeling of humanity led him to view in a very different light; for, when expostulated with by Mr. Murray on his generous intentions toward one "whom nobody else would give a single farthing to," he answered, "It is for that very reason *I* give it, because nobody else will." The person in question was Mr. Thomas Ashe, author of a certain notorious publication called

"The Book," which, from the delicate mysteries discussed in its pages, attracted far more notice than its talent, or even mischief, deserved. In a fit, it is to be hoped, of sincere penitence, this man wrote to Lord Byron, alleging poverty as his excuse for the vile uses to which he had hitherto prostituted his pen, and soliciting his lordship's aid toward enabling him to exist, in future, more reputably. To this application the following answer, marked, in the highest degree, by good sense, humanity, and honourable sentiment, was returned by Lord Byron:

TO MR. ASHE.

"4 Bennet Street, St. James's, Dec. 14, 1813.

"Sir: — I leave town for a few days to-morrow; on my return, I will answer your letter more at length. Whatever may be your situation, I cannot but commend your resolution to abjure and abandon the publication and composition of works such as those to which you have alluded. Depend upon it, they amuse *few*, disgrace both *reader* and *writer*, and benefit *none*. It will be my wish to assist you, as far as my limited means will admit, to break such a bondage. In your answer, inform me what sum you think would enable you to extricate yourself from the hands of your employers, and to regain, at least, temporary independence, and I shall be glad to contribute my mite toward it. At present, I must conclude. Your name is not unknown to me, and I regret, for your own sake, that you

have ever lent it to the works you mention. In saying this, I merely repeat your *own words* in your letter to me, and have no wish whatever to say a single syllable that may appear to insult your misfortunes. If I have, excuse me; it is unintentional.

"Yours, etc.,

"BYRON."

In answer to this letter, Ashe mentioned, as the sum necessary to extricate him from his difficulties, £150 — to be advanced at the rate of ten pounds per month; and, some short delay having occurred in the reply to this demand, the modest applicant, in renewing his suit, complained, it appears, of neglect: on which Lord Byron, with a good temper which few, in a similar case, could imitate, answered him as follows:

TO MR. ASHE.

"January 5, 1814.

"SIR: — When you accuse a stranger of neglect, you forget that it is possible business or absence from London may have interfered to delay his answer, as has actually occurred in the present instance. But to the point. I am willing to do what I can to extricate you from your situation. Your first scheme[82] I was considering; but your own impatience appears to have rendered it abortive, if not irretrievable. I will deposit in Mr. Murray's hands (with his consent) the sum you

mentioned, to be advanced for the time at ten pounds per month.

"P. S. I write in the greatest hurry, which may make my letter a little abrupt; but, as I said before, I have no wish to distress your feelings."

The service thus humanely proffered was no less punctually performed; and the following is one of the many acknowledgments of payment which I find in Ashe's letters to Mr. Murray: "I have the honour to enclose you another memorandum for the sum of ten pounds, in compliance with the munificent instructions of Lord Byron." [83]

His friend, Mr. Merivale, one of the translators of those "Selections from the Anthology" which we have seen he regretted so much not having taken with him on his travels, published a poem about this time, which he thus honours with his praise.

TO MR. MERIVALE.

"January, 1814.

"My dear Merivale: — I have redde 'Roncesvaux' with very great pleasure, and (if I were so disposed) see very little room for criticism. There is a choice of two lines in one of the last cantos, — I think 'Live and protect' better, because 'Oh who?' implies a doubt of Roland's power or inclination. I would allow the — but that point you

yourself must determine on — I mean the doubt as to where to place a part of the poem, whether between the actions or no. Only if you wish to have all the success you deserve, *never listen to friends*, and — as I am not the least troublesome of the number, least of all to me.

"I hope you will be out soon. *March*, sir, *March* is the month for the *trade*, and they must be considered. You have written a very noble poem, and nothing but the detestable taste of the day can do you harm, — but I think you will beat it. Your measure is uncommonly well chosen and wielded." [84]

In the extracts from his journal, just given, there is a passage that cannot fail to have been remarked, where, in speaking of his admiration of some lady, whose name he has himself left blank, the noble writer says, "A wife would be the salvation of me." It was under this conviction, which not only himself but some of his friends entertained, of the prudence of his taking timely refuge in matrimony from those perplexities which form the sequel of all less regular ties, that he had been induced, about a year before, to turn his thoughts seriously to marriage, — at least, as seriously as his thoughts were ever capable of being so turned, — and chiefly, I believe, by the advice and intervention of his friend Lady Melbourne, to become a suitor for the hand of a relative of that lady, Miss Milbanke. Though his proposal was not then ac-

cepted, every assurance of friendship and regard accompanied the refusal; a wish was even expressed that they should continue to write to each other, and a correspondence, in consequence, — somewhat singular between two young persons of different sexes, inasmuch as love was not the subject of it, — ensued between them. We have seen how highly Lord Byron estimated as well the virtues as the accomplishments of the young lady; but it is evident that on neither side, at this period, was love either felt or professed. [85]

In the meantime, new entanglements, in which his heart was the willing dupe of his fancy and vanity, came to engross the young poet; and still, as the usual penalties of such pursuits followed, he again found himself sighing for the sober yoke of wedlock, as some security against their recurrence. There were, indeed, in the interval between Miss Milbanke's refusal and acceptance of him, two or three other young women of rank who, at different times, formed the subject of his matrimonial dreams. In the society of one of these, whose family had long honoured me with their friendship, he and I passed much of our time, during this and the preceding spring; and it will be found that, in a subsequent part of his correspondence, he represents me as having entertained an anxious wish that he should so far cultivate my fair friend's favour as to give a chance, at least, of matrimony being the result.

That I, more than once, expressed some such feeling is undoubtedly true. Fully concurring with the opinion, not only of himself, but of others of his friends, that in marriage lay his only chance of salvation from the sort of perplexing attachments into which he was now constantly tempted, I saw in none of those whom he admired with more legitimate views so many requisites for the difficult task of winning him into fidelity and happiness as in the lady in question. Combining beauty of the highest order with a mind intelligent and ingenuous, — having just learning enough to give refinement to her taste, and far too much taste to make pretensions to learning, — with a patrician spirit proud as his own, but showing it only in a delicate generosity of spirit, a feminine high-mindedness, which would have led her to tolerate his defects in consideration of his noble qualities and his glory, and even to sacrifice silently some of her own happiness rather than violate the responsibility in which she stood pledged to the world for his; such was, from long experience, my impression of the character of this lady; and perceiving Lord Byron to be attracted by her more obvious claims to admiration, I felt a pleasure no less in rendering justice to the still rarer qualities which she possessed, than in endeavouring to raise my noble friend's mind to the contemplation of a higher model of female character than he had, unluckily for himself, been much in the habit of studying.

To this extent do I confess myself to have been influenced by the sort of feeling which he attributes to me. But in taking for granted (as it will appear he did from one of his letters) that I entertained any very decided or definite wishes on the subject, he gave me more credit for seriousness in my suggestions than I deserved. If even the lady herself, the unconscious object of these speculations, by whom he was regarded in no other light than that of a distinguished acquaintance, could have consented to undertake the perilous — but still possible and glorious — achievement of attaching Byron to virtue, I own that, sanguinely as, in theory, I might have looked to the result, I should have seen, not without trembling, the happiness of one whom I had known and valued from her childhood risked in the experiment.

I shall now proceed to resume the thread of the journal, which I had broken off, and of which, it will be perceived, the noble author himself had, for some weeks, at this time, interrupted the progress.

JOURNAL, 1814.

"February 18.

"Better than a month since I last journalised — most of it out of London and at Notts., but a busy one and a pleasant, at least three weeks of it. On my return, I find all the newspapers in hysterics,[86] and town in an uproar, on the avowal and republica-

tion of two stanzas on Princess Charlotte's weeping at regency's speech to Lauderdale in 1812. They are daily at it still; some of the abuse good, all of it hearty. They talk of a motion in our House upon it — be it so.

"Got up — redde the *Morning Post*, containing the battle of Buonaparte, the destruction of the Custom-house, and a paragraph on me as long as my pedigree, and vituperative, as usual.

"Hobhouse is returned to England. He is my best friend, the most lively, and a man of the most sterling talents extant.

"'The Corsair' has been conceived, written, published, etc., since I last took up this journal. They tell me it has great success; it was written *con amore*, and much from *existence*. Murray is satisfied with its progress; and if the public are equally so with the perusal, there's an end of the matter.

"Nine o'clock.

"Been to Hanson's on business. Saw Rogers, and had a note from Lady Melbourne, who says, it is said I am 'much out of spirits.' I wonder if I really am or not? I have certainly enough of 'that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart,' and it is better they should believe it to be the result of these attacks than of the real cause; but — ay, ay, always, *but*, to the end of the chapter.

"Hobhouse has told me ten thousand anecdotes of Napoleon, all good and true. My friend H. is

the most entertaining of companions, and a fine fellow to boot.

"Redde a little — wrote notes and letters, and am alone, which Locke says is bad company. 'Be not solitary, be not idle.' Um! — the idleness is troublesome; but I can't see so much to regret in the solitude. The more I see of men, the less I like them. If I could but say so of women too, all would be well. Why can't I? I am now six and twenty; my passions have had enough to cool them; my affections more than enough to wither them, — and yet — and yet — always *yet* and *but* — 'Excellent well, you are a fishmonger — get thee to a nunnery.' 'They fool me to the top of my bent.'

"Midnight.

"Began a letter, which I threw into the fire. Redde — but to little purpose. Did not visit Hobhouse, as I promised and ought. No matter, the loss is mine. Smoked cigars.

"Napoleon! — this week will decide his fate. All seems against him; but I believe and hope he will win — at least, beat back the invaders. What right have we to prescribe sovereigns to France? Oh for a republic! 'Brutus, thou sleepest.' Hobhouse abounds in continental anecdotes of this extraordinary man; all in favour of his intellect and courage, but against his *bonhommie*. No wonder; how should he, who knows mankind well, do other than despise and abhor them?

"The greater the equality, the more impartially evil is distributed, and becomes lighter by the division among so many — therefore a republic!

"More notes from Mad. de ——— unanswered — and so they shall remain. I admire her abilities, but really her society is overwhelming — an avalanche that buries one in glittering nonsense — all snow and sophistry.

"Shall I go to Mackintosh's on Tuesday? um! — I did not go to Marquis Lansdowne's, nor to Miss Berry's, though both are pleasant. So is Sir James's, — but I don't know — I believe one is not the better for parties; at least, unless some *regnante* is there.

"I wonder how the deuce anybody could make such a world; for what purpose dandies, for instance, were ordained — and kings — and fellows of colleges — and women of 'a certain age' — and many men of any age — and myself, most of all!

"'Divesne prisco et natus ab Inacho,
Nil interest, an pauper, et infima
De gente, sub dio moreris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci.
. . . . . .
Omnes eodem cogimur.'

"Is there anything beyond? — *who* knows? *He* that can't tell. Who tells that there *is?* He who don't know. And when shall he know? perhaps, when he don't expect, and generally when he don't wish it. In this last respect, however, all are not

alike: it depends a good deal upon education, — something upon nerves and habits — but most upon digestion.

"Saturday, Feb. 19.

"Just returned from seeing Kean in 'Richard.' By Jove, he is a soul! Life — nature — truth without exaggeration or diminution. Kemble's 'Hamlet' is perfect; but 'Hamlet' is not nature. Richard is a man; and Kean is Richard. Now to my own concerns.

"Went to Waite's. Teeth all right and white; but he says that I grind them in my sleep and chip the edges. That same sleep is no friend of mine, though I court him sometimes for half the twenty-four.

"February 20.

"Got up and tore out two leaves of this journal — I don't know why. Hodgson just called and gone. He has much *bonhommie* with his other good qualities, and more talent than he has yet had credit for beyond his circle.

"An invitation to dine at Holland House to meet Kean. He is worth meeting; and I hope, by getting into good society, he will be prevented from falling like Cooke. He is greater now on the stage, and off he should never be less. There is a stupid and underrating criticism upon him in one of the newspapers. I thought that, last night, though great, he rather underacted more than the first time. This may be the effect of these cavils; but

I hope he has more sense than to mind them. He cannot expect to maintain his present eminence, or to advance still higher, without the envy of his green-room fellows, and the nibbling of their admirers. But, if he don't beat them all, why then — merit hath no purchase in 'these costermonger days.'

"I wish that I had a talent for the drama; I would write a tragedy *now*. But no, — it is gone. Hodgson talks of one, — he will do it well; and I think M——e should try. He has wonderful powers, and much variety; besides, he has lived and felt. To write so as to bring home to the heart, the heart must have been tried, — but, perhaps, ceased to be so. While you are under the influence of passions, you only feel, but cannot describe them, — any more than, when in action, you could turn round and tell the story to your next neighbour! When all is over, — all, all, and irrevocable, — trust to memory — she is then but too faithful.

"Went out, and answered some letters, yawned now and then, and redde the 'Robbers.' Fine, — but Fiesco is better; and Alfieri and Monti's 'Aristodemo' *best*. They are more equal than the Tedeschi dramatists.

"Answered, — or, rather, acknowledged — the receipt of young Reynolds's poem, 'Safie.' The lad is clever, but much of his thoughts are borrowed, — *whence*, the reviewers may find out. I hate discouraging a young one; and I think — though wild

and more Oriental than he would be, had he seen the scenes where he has placed his tale — that he has much talent, and, certainly, fire enough.

"Received a very singular epistle; and the mode of its conveyance, through Lord H.'s hands, as curious as the letter itself. But it was gratifying and pretty.

"Sunday, February 27.

"Here I am, alone, instead of dining at Lord H.'s, where I was asked, — but not inclined to go anywhere. Hobhouse says I am growing a *loup garou*, — a solitary hobgoblin. True; 'I am myself alone.' The last week has been passed in reading — seeing plays — now and then visitors — sometimes yawning and sometimes sighing, but no writing, — save of letters. If I could always read, I should never feel the want of society. Do I regret it? — um! — 'Man delights not me,' and only one woman — at a time.

"There is something to me very softening in the presence of a woman, — some strange influence, even if one is not in love with them, — which I cannot at all account for, having no very high opinion of the sex. But yet, — I always feel in better humour with myself and everything else, if there is a woman within ken. Even Mrs. Mule,[87] my firelighter, — the most ancient and withered of her kind, and (except to myself) not the best tempered, — always makes me laugh, — no difficult task when I am 'i' the vein.'

"Heigho! I would I were in mine island! — I am not well; and yet I look in good health. At times, I fear, 'I am not in my perfect mind;' and yet my heart and head have stood many a crash, and what should ail them now? They prey upon themselves, and I am sick — sick — 'Prithee, undo this button — why should a cat, a rat, a dog have life — and *thou* no life at all?' Six and twenty years, as they call them: why, I might and should have been a pacha by this time. 'I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun.'

"Buonaparte is not yet beaten; but has rebutted Blücher, and repiqued Swartzenburg. This it is to have a head. If he again wins, 'Væ victis!'

"Sunday, March 6.

"On Tuesday last dined with Rogers, — Madame de Staël, Mackintosh, Sheridan, Erskine, and Payne Knight, Lady Donegall and Miss R. there. Sheridan told a very good story of himself and Madame de Récamier's handkerchief; Erskine a few stories of himself only. *She* is going to write a big book about England, she says; — I believe her. Asked by her how I liked Miss ———'s thing, called ———, and answered (very sincerely) that I thought it very bad for *her*, and worse than any of the others. Afterward thought it possible Lady Donegall, being Irish, might be a patroness of ———, and was rather sorry for my opinion, as I hate putting people into fusses, either with them-

selves or their favourites; it looks as if one did it on purpose. The party went off very well, and the fish was very much to my gusto. But we got up too soon after the women; and Mrs. Corinne always lingers so long after dinner that we wish her in — the drawing-room.

"To-day C. called, and while sitting here, in came Merivale. During our colloquy, C. (ignorant that M. was the writer) abused the 'mawkishness of the *Quarterly Review* of "Grimm's Correspondence."' I (knowing the secret) changed the conversation as soon as I could; and C. went away, quite convinced of having made the most favourable impression on his new acquaintance. Merivale is luckily a very good-natured fellow, or, God he knows what might have been engendered from such a malaprop. I did not look at him while this was going on, but I felt like a coal — for I like Merivale, as well as the article in question.

"Asked to Lady Keith's to-morrow evening — I think I will go; but it is the first party invitation I have accepted this 'season,' as the learned Fletcher called it, when that youngest brat of Lady ———'s cut my eye and cheek open with a misdirected pebble, — 'Never mind, my lord, the scar will be gone before the *season;*' as if one's eye was of no importance in the meantime.

"Lord Erskine called, and gave me his famous pamphlet, with a marginal note and corrections in

his handwriting. Sent it to be bound superbly, and shall treasure it.

"Sent my fine print of Napoleon to be framed. It *is* framed; and the emperor becomes his robes as if he had been hatched in them.

"March 7.

"Rose at seven — ready by half-past eight — went to Mr. Hanson's, Berkeley Square — went to church with his eldest daughter, Mary Anne (a good girl), and gave her away to the Earl of Portsmouth. Saw her fairly a countess — congratulated the family and groom (bride) — drank a bumper of wine (wholesome sherries) to their felicity, and all that — and came home. Asked to stay to dinner, but could not. At three sat to Phillips for faces. Called on Lady M. I like her so well, that I always stay too long. (Mem. to mend of that.)

"Passed the evening with Hobhouse, who has begun a poem, which promises highly; wish he would go on with it. Heard some curious extracts from a life of Morosini, the blundering Venetian, who blew up the Acropolis at Athens with a bomb, and be d——d to him! Waxed sleepy — just come home — must go to bed, and am engaged to meet Sheridan to-morrow at Rogers's.

"Queer ceremony that same of marriage — saw many abroad, Greek and Catholic — one, at *home*, many years ago. There be some strange phrases in the prologue (the exhortation), which made me turn away, not to laugh in the face of the surplice-

man. Made one blunder, when I joined the hands of the happy — rammed their left hands, by mistake, into one another. Corrected it — bustled back to the altar-rail, and said 'Amen.' Portsmouth responded as if he had got the whole by heart; and, if anything, was rather before the priest. It is now midnight, and . . .

"March 10, Thor's Day.

"On Tuesday dined with Rogers, — Mackintosh, Sheridan, Sharpe, — much talk, and good, — all, except my own little prattlement. Much of old times — Horne Tooke — the Trials — evidence of Sheridan, and anecdotes of those times, when *I*, alas! was an infant. If I had been a man, I would have made an English Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

"Set down Sheridan at Brookes's, — where, by the by, he could not have well set down himself, as he and I were the only drinkers. Sherry means to stand for Westminster, as Cochrane (the stock-jobbing hoaxer) must vacate. Brougham is a candidate. I fear for poor dear Sherry. Both have talents of the highest order, but the youngster has *yet* a character. We shall see, if he lives to Sherry's age, how he will pass over the redhot ploughshares of public life. I don't know why, but I hate to see the *old* ones lose; particularly Sheridan, notwithstanding all his *méchanceté*.

"Received many, and the kindest, thanks from Lady Portsmouth, *père* and *mère*, for my match-

making. I don't regret it, as she looks the countess well, and is a very good girl. It is odd how well she carries her new honours. She looks a different woman, and high-bred, too. I had no idea that I could make so good a peeress.

"Went to the play with Hobhouse. Mrs. Jordan superlative in Hoyden, and Jones well enough in Foppington. *What plays!* what wit! — hélas! Congreve and Vanbrugh are your only comedy. Our society is too insipid now for the like copy. Would *not* go to Lady Keith's. Hobhouse thought it odd. I wonder *he* should like parties. If one is in love, and wants to break a commandment and covet anything that is there, they do very well. But to go out amongst the mere herd, without a motive, pleasure, or pursuit — s'death! 'I'll none of it.' He told me an odd report, — that *I* am the actual Conrad, the veritable Corsair, and that part of my travels are supposed to have passed in privacy. Um! — people sometimes hit near the truth; but never the whole truth. H. don't know what I was about the year after he left the Levant; nor does any one — nor — nor — nor — however, it is a lie — but, 'I doubt the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth!'

"I shall have letters of importance to-morrow. Which, ———, ———, or ———? heigho! — ——— is in my heart, ——— in my head, ——— in my eye, and the *single* one, Heaven knows where. All write, and will be answered. 'Since I have

crept in favour with myself, I must maintain it;' but *I* never 'mistook my person,' though I think others have.

"——— called today in great despair about his mistress, who has taken a freak of . . . He began a letter to her, but was obliged to stop short — I finished it for him, and he copied and sent it. If *he* holds out, and keeps to my instructions of affected indifference, she will lower her colours. If she don't, he will, at least, get rid of her, and she don't seem much worth keeping. But the poor lad is in love — if that is the case, she will win. When they once discover their power, *finita e la musica.*

"Sleepy, and must go to bed.

"Tuesday, March 15.

"Dined yesterday with R., Mackintosh, and Sharpe. Sheridan could not come. Sharpe told several very amusing anecdotes of Henderson, the actor. Stayed till late, and came home, having drank so much *tea*, that I did not get to sleep till six this morning. R. says I am to be in *this Quarterly* — cut up, I presume, as they 'hate us youth.' *N'importe.* As Sharpe was passing by the doors of some debating society (the Westminster Forum), in his way to dinner, he saw rubricked on the walls *Scott's* name and *mine* — 'Which the best poet?' being the question of the evening; and I suppose all the Templars and *would bes* took our rhymes in vain, in the course of the controversy. Which had

the greater show of hands, I neither know nor care; but I feel the coupling of the names as a compliment, — though I think Scott deserves better company.

"W. W. called — Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, etc. Wrote to ——— the 'Corsair' report. She says she don't wonder, since 'Conrad is so *like*.' It is odd that one, who knows me so thoroughly, should tell me this to my face. However, if she don't know, nobody can.

"Mackintosh is, it seems, the writer of the defensive letter in the *Morning Chronicle*. If so, it is very kind, and more than I did for myself.

"Told Murray to secure for me Bandello's Italian novels at the sale to-morrow. To me they will be *nuts*. Redde a satire on myself, called 'Anti-Byron,' and told Murray to publish it if he liked. The object of the author is to prove me an atheist and a systematic conspirator against law and government. Some of the verse is good; the prose I don't quite understand. He asserts that my 'deleterious works' have had 'an effect upon civil society, which requires,' etc., and his own poetry. I is a lengthy poem, and a long preface, with a harmonious title-page. Like the fly in the fable, I seem to have got upon a wheel which makes much dust; but, unlike the said fly, I do not take it all for my own raising.

"A letter from *Bella*, which I answered. I shall be in love with her again, if I don't take care.

"I shall begin a more regular system of reading soon.

"Thursday, March 17.

"I have been sparring with Jackson for exercise this morning; and mean to continue and renew my acquaintance with the muffles. My chest and arms and wind are in very good plight, and I am not in flesh. I used to be a hard hitter, and my arms are very long for my height (5 feet 8 1-2 inches). At any rate, exercise is good, and this the severest of all; fencing and the broadsword never fatigued me half so much.

"Redde the 'Quarrels of Authors' (another sort of *sparring*) — a new work, by that most entertaining and researching writer, Israeli. They seem to be an irritable set, and I wish myself well out of it. 'I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat.' What the devil had I to do with scribbling? It is too late to inquire, and all regret is useless. But, an' it were to do again, — I should write again, I suppose. Such is human nature, at least my share of it; though I shall think better of myself, if I have sense to stop now. If I have a wife, and that wife has a son — by anybody — I will bring up mine heir in the most anti-poetical way, — make him a lawyer, or a pirate, or — anything. But, if he writes too, I shall be sure he is none of mine, and cut him off with a Bank token. Must write a letter — three o'clock.

"Sunday, March 20.

"I intended to go to Lady Hardewick's, but won't. I always begin the day with a bias toward going to parties; but, as the evening advances, my stimulus fails, and I hardly ever go out — and, when I do, always regret it. This might have been a pleasant one; at least, the hostess is a very superior woman. Lady Lansdowne's to-morrow — Lady Heathcote's Wednesday. Um! — I must spur myself into going to some of them, or it will look like rudeness, and it is better to do as other people do — confound them!

"Redde Machiavel, parts of Chardin, and Sismondi, and Bandello — by starts. Redde the *Edinburgh*, 44, just come out. In the beginning of the article on 'Edgeworth's Patronage,' I have gotten a high compliment, I perceive. Whether this is creditable to me I know not; but it does honour to the editor, because he once abused me. Many a man will retract praise; none but a high-spirited mind will revoke its censure, or *can* praise the man it has once attacked. I have often, since my return to England, heard Jeffrey most highly commended by those who know him for things independent of his talents. I admire him for *this* — not because he has *praised me* (I have been so praised elsewhere and abused, alternately, that mere habit has rendered me as indifferent to both as a man at twenty-six can be to anything), but because he is, perhaps, the *only man* who,

under the relations in which he and I stand, or stood, with regard to each other, would have the liberality to act thus; none but a great soul dared hazard it. The height on which he stands has not made him giddy;— a little scribbler would have gone on cavilling to the end of the chapter. As to the justice of his panegyric, that is matter of taste. There are plenty to question it, and glad, too, of the opportunity.

"Lord Erskine called to-day. He means to carry down his reflections on the war — or rather wars — to the present day. I trust that he will. Must send to Mr. Murray to get the binding of my copy of his pamphlet finished, as Lord E. has promised me to correct it, and add some marginal notes to it. Anything in his handwriting will be a treasure, which will gather compound interest from years. Erskine has high expectations of Mackintosh's promised 'History.' Undoubtedly it must be a classic, when finished.

"Sparred with Jackson again yesterday morning, and shall to-morrow. I feel all the better for it, in spirits, though my arms and shoulders are very stiff from it. Mem. to attend the pugilistic dinner, — Marquess Huntley is in the chair.

"Lord Erskine thinks that ministers must be in peril of going out. So much the better for him. To me it is the same who are in or out; we want something more than a change of ministers, and some day we will have it.

"I remember,[88] in riding from Chrisso to Castri (Delphos), along the sides of Parnassus, I saw six eagles in the air. It is uncommon to see so many together; and it was the number — not the species, which is common enough — that excited my attention.

"The last bird I ever fired at was an *eaglet*, on the shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near Vostitza. It was only wounded, and I tried to save it, the eye was so bright; but it pined, and died in a few days; and I never did since, and never will, attempt the death of another bird. I wonder what put these two things into my head just now. I have been reading Sismondi, and there is nothing there that could induce the recollection.

"I am mightily taken with Braccio di Montone, Giovanni Galeazzo, and Eccelino. But the last is *not* Bracciaferro (of the same name), Count of Ravenna, whose history I want to trace. There is a fine engraving in Lavater, from a picture by Fuseli, of *that* Ezzelin, over the body of Meduna, punished by him for a *hitch* in her constancy during his absence in the Crusades. He was right — but I want to know the story.

"Tuesday, March 22.

"Last night, *party* at Lansdowne House. To-night, *party* at Lady Charlotte Greville's — deplorable waste of time, and something of temper. Nothing imparted — nothing acquired — talking

without ideas; if anything like *thought* in my mind, it was not on the subjects on which we were gabbling. Heigho! — and in this way half London pass what is called life. To-morrow there is Lady Heathcote's — shall I go? yes — to punish myself for not having a pursuit.

"Let me see — what did I see? The only person who much struck me was Lady S——d's eldest daughter, Lady C. L. They say she is *not* pretty. I don't know — everything is pretty that pleases; but there is an air of *soul* about her — and her colour changes — and there is that shyness of the antelope (which I delight in) in her manner so much, that I observed her more than I did any other woman in the rooms, and only looked at anything else when I thought she might perceive and feel embarrassed by my scrutiny. After all, there may be something of association in this. She is a friend of Augusta's, and whatever she loves I can't help liking.

"Her mother, the marchioness, talked to me a little; and I was twenty times on the point of asking her to introduce me to *sa fille*, but I stopped short. This comes of that affray with the Carlisles.

"Earl Grey told me laughingly of a paragraph in the last *Moniteur*, which has stated, among other symptoms of rebellion, some particulars of the *sensation* occasioned in all our government gazettes by the 'tear' lines, — *only* amplifying, in its restatement, an epigram (by the by, no epi-

gram except in the *Greek* acceptation of the word) into a *roman*. I wonder the *Couriers*, etc., have not translated that part of the *Moniteur*, with additional comments.

"The Princess of Wales has requested Fuseli to paint from 'The Corsair,' — leaving to him the choice of any passage for the subject: so Mr. Locke tells me. Tired, jaded, selfish, and supine — must go to bed.

"*Roman*, at least *Romance*, means a song sometimes, as in the Spanish. I suppose this is the *Moniteur's* meaning, unless he has confused it with 'The Corsair.'

"Albany, March 28.

"This night got into my new apartments, rented of Lord Althorp, on a lease of seven years. Spacious, and room for my books and sabres. *In* the *house*, too, another advantage. The last few days, or whole week, have been very abstemious, regular in exercise, and yet very *un*well.

"Yesterday, dined *tête-à-tête* at the Cocoa with Scrope Davies — sat from six till midnight — drank between us one bottle of champagne and six of claret, neither of which wines ever affect me. Offered to take Scrope home in my carriage; but he was tipsy and pious, and I was obliged to leave him on his knees praying to I know not what purpose or pagod. No headache, nor sickness that night nor to-day. Got up, if anything, earlier than usual — sparred with Jackson *ad sudorem*, and

have been much better in health than for many days. I have heard nothing more from Scrope. Yesterday paid him £4,800, a debt of some standing, and which I wished to have paid before. My mind is much relieved by the removal of that *debit*.

"Augusta wants me to make it up with Carlisle. I have refused *everybody* else, but I can't deny her anything; so I must e'en do it, though I had as lief 'drink up Eisel — eat a crocodile.' Let me see — Ward, the Hollands, the Lambs, Rogers, etc. — everybody, more or less, have been trying for the last two years to accommodate this *couplet* quarrel to no purpose. I shall laugh if Augusta succeeds.

"Redde a little of many things — shall get in all my books to-morrow. Luckily this room will hold them — with 'ample room and verge, etc., the characters of hell to trace.' I must set about some employment soon; my heart begins to eat *itself* again.

"April 8.

"Out of town six days. On my return, find my poor little pagod, Napoleon, pushed off his pedestal; the thieves are in Paris. It is his own fault. Like Milo, he would rend the oak;[89] but it closed again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts — lion, bear, down to the dirtiest jackal — may all tear him. That Muscovite winter *wedged* his arms; ever since, he has fought with his feet and teeth.

The last may still leave their marks; and 'I guess now' (as the Yankees say) that he will yet play them a pass. He is in their rear — between them and their homes. Query — will they ever reach them?

"Saturday, April 9, 1814.

"I mark this day!

"Napoleon Buonaparte has abdicated the throne of the world. 'Excellent well.' Methinks Sylla did better; for he revenged and resigned in the height of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes — the finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals upon record. Diocletian did well too — Amurath not amiss, had he become aught except a dervise — Charles the Fifth but so so — but Napoleon, worst of all. What! wait till they were in his capital, and then talk of his readiness to give up what is already gone! 'What whining monk art thou — what holy cheat?' 'Sdeath! — Dionysius at Corinth was yet a king to this. The 'Isle of Elba' to retire to! Well — if it had been Caprea, I should have marvelled less. 'I see men's minds are but a parcel of their fortunes.' I am utterly bewildered and confounded.

"I don't know — but I think *I*, even *I* (an insect compared with this creature), have set my life on casts not a millionth part of this man's. But, after all, a crown may not be worth dying for. Yet, to outlive *Lodi* for this! Oh, that Juvenal or Johnson could rise from the dead! 'Expende — quot libras

in duce summo invenies?' I knew they were light in the balance of mortality; but I thought their living dust weighed more *carats*. Alas! this imperial diamond hath a flaw in it, and is now hardly fit to stick in a glazier's pencil: the pen of the historian won't rate it worth a ducat.

"Psha! 'something too much of this.' But I won't give him up even now; though all his admirers have, 'like the thanes, fallen from him.'

"April 10.

"I do not know that I am happiest when alone; but this I am sure of, that I never am long in the society even of *her* I love (God knows too well, and the devil probably too) without a yearning for the company of my lamp and my utterly confused and tumbled-over library.[90] Even in the day, I send away my carriage oftener than I use or abuse it. *Per esempio*, — I have not stirred out of these rooms for these four days past; but I have sparred for exercise (windows open) with Jackson an hour daily, to attenuate and keep up the ethereal part of me. The more violent the fatigue, the better my spirits for the rest of the day; and then, my evenings have that calm nothingness of languor which I most delight in. To-day I have boxed one hour — written an ode to Napoleon Buonaparte — copied it — eaten six biscuits — drunk four bottles of soda-water — redde away the rest of my time — besides giving poor ——— a world of advice about this mistress

of his, who is plaguing him into a phthisic and intolerable tediousness. I am a pretty fellow truly to lecture about 'the sect.' No matter, my counsels are all thrown away.

"April 19, 1814.

"There is ice at both poles, north and south — all extremes are the same — misery belongs to the highest and the lowest only, — to the emperor and the beggar, when unsixpenced and unthroned. There is, to be sure, a damned insipid medium — an equinoctial line — no one knows where, except upon maps and measurement.

> "'And all our *yesterdays* have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death.'

I will keep no further journal of that same hesternal torch-light; and, to prevent me from returning, like a dog, to the vomit of memory, I tear out the remaining leaves of this volume, and write, in *Ipecacuanha*, — 'that the Bourbons are restored!' — 'Hang up philosophy.' To be sure, I have long despised myself and man, but I never spat in the face of my species before — 'O fool! I shall go mad.'"

The perusal of this singular journal having made the reader acquainted with the chief occurrences that marked the present period of his history — the publication of "The Corsair," the attacks upon him in the newspapers, etc. — there only remains for

me to add his correspondence at the same period, by which the moods and movements of his mind, during these events, will be still further illustrated.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Sunday, Jan. 2, 1814.

"Excuse this dirty paper — it is the *pen*ultimate half-sheet of a quire. Thanks for your book and the *Ln. Chron.*, which I return. 'The Corsair' is copied, and now at Lord Holland's; but I wish Mr. Gifford to have it to-night.

"Mr. Dallas is very *perverse;* so that I have offended both him and you, when I really meaned to do good, at least to one, and certainly not to annoy either.[91] But I shall manage him, I hope. I am pretty confident of the *Tale* itself; but one cannot be sure. If I get it from Lord Holland, it shall be sent. Yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

["Jan., 1814.]

"I will answer your letter this evening; in the meantime, it may be sufficient to say that there was no intention on my part to annoy you, but merely to *serve* Dallas, and also to rescue myself from a possible imputation that *I* had other objects than fame in writing so frequently. Whenever I avail myself of any profit arising from my pen, depend upon it, it is not for my own convenience; at least it never has been so, and I hope never will.

"P. S. I shall answer this evening, and will set all right about Dallas. I thank you for your expressions of personal regard, which I can assure you I do not lightly value."

TO MR. MOORE.

"January 6, 1814.

"I have got a devil of a long story in the press, entitled 'The Corsair,' in the regular heroic measure. It is a pirate's isle, peopled with my own creatures, and you may easily suppose they do a world of mischief through the three cantos. Now for your dedication — if you will accept it. This is positively my last experiment on public *literary* opinion, till I turn my thirtieth year, — if so be I flourish until that downhill period. I have a confidence for you — a perplexing one to me, and, just at present, in a state of abeyance in itself.

"However, we shall see. In the meantime, you may amuse yourself with my suspense, and put all the justices of peace in requisition, in case I come into your county with 'hackbut bent.'

"Seriously, whether I am to hear from her or him, it is a *pause*, which I shall fill up with as few thoughts of my own as I can borrow from other people. Anything is better than stagnation; and now, in the interregnum of my autumn and a strange summer adventure, which I don't like to think of (I don't mean ———'s, however, which is laughable only), the antithetical state of my lucu-

brations makes me alive, and Macbeth can 'sleep no more,' — he was lucky in getting rid of the drowsy sensation of waking again.

"Pray write to me. I must send you a copy of the letter of dedication. When do you come out? I am sure we don't *clash* this time, for I am all at sea, and in action, — and a wife, and a mistress, etc.

"Thomas, thou art a happy fellow; but if you wish us to be so, you must come up to town, as you did last year: and we shall have a world to say, and to see, and to hear. Let me hear from you.

"P. S. Of course you will keep my secret, and don't even talk in your sleep of it. Happen what may, your dedication is ensured, being already written; and I shall copy it out fair to-night, in case business or amusement — *Amant alterna Camœnæ.*"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Jan. 7, 1814.

"You don't like the dedication — very well, there is another; but you will send the other to Mr. Moore, that he may know I *had* written it. I send also mottoes for the cantos. I think you will allow that an elephant may be more sagacious, but cannot be more docile.

"Yours, BN.

"The *name* is again altered to *Medora.*" [92]

TO MR. MOORE.

"January 8, 1814.

"As it would not be fair to press you into a dedication, without previous notice, I send you *two*, and I will tell you *why two*. The first, Mr. M., who sometimes takes upon him the critic (and I bear it from *astonishment*), says may do you *harm* — God forbid! — this alone makes me listen to him. The fact is, he is a damned Tory, and has, I dare swear, something of *self*, which I cannot divine, at the bottom of his objection, as it is the allusion to Ireland to which he objects. But he be d——d — though a good fellow enough (your sinner would not be worth a d——n).

"Take your choice; no one, save he and Mr. Dallas, has seen either, and D. is quite on my side, and for the first.[93] If I can but testify to you and the world how truly I admire and esteem you, I shall be quite satisfied. As to *prose*, I don't know Addison's from Johnson's; but I will try to mend my cacology. Pray perpend, pronounce, and don't be offended with either.

"My last epistle would probably put you in a fidget. But the devil, who *ought* to be civil on such occasions, proved so, and took my letter to the right place.

"Is it not odd? — the very fate I said she had escaped from ———, she has now undergone from the worthy ———. Like Mr. Fitzgerald, shall I

not lay claim to the character of 'Vates?' — as he did in the *Morning Herald* for prophesying the fall of Buonaparte, — who, by the by, I don't think is yet fallen. I wish he would rally and rout your legitimate sovereigns, having a mortal hate to all royal entails. But I am scrawling a treatise. Good night. Ever," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"January 11, 1814.

"Correct this proof by Mr. Gifford's (and from the MSS.), particularly as to the *pointing*. I have added a section for *Gulnare*, to fill up the parting, and dismiss her more ceremoniously. If Mr. Gifford or you dislike, 'tis but a *sponge* and another midnight better employed than in yawning over Miss ———; who, by the by, may soon return the compliment.

"Wednesday or Thursday.

"P. S. I have redde . . . It is full of praises of Lord Ellenborough! (from which I infer near and dear relations at the bar), and . . .

"I do not love Madame de Staël; but, depend upon it, she beats all your natives hollow as an authoress, in my opinion; and I would not say this if I could help it.

"P. S. Pray report my best acknowledgments to Mr. Gifford in any words that may best express

how truly his kindness obliges me. I won't bore him with *lip* thanks or *notes*."

TO MR. MOORE.

"January 13, 1814.

"I have but a moment to write, but all is as it should be. I have said really far short of my opinion, but if you think enough, I am content. Will you return the proof by the post, as I leave town on Sunday, and have no other corrected copy. I put 'servant,' as being less familiar before the public; because I don't like presuming upon our friendship to infringe upon forms. As to the other *word*, you may be sure it is one I cannot hear or repeat too often.

"I write in an agony of haste and confusion. Perdonate."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"January 15, 1814.

"Before any proof goes to Mr. Gifford, it may be as well to revise this, where there are *words omitted*, faults committed, and the devil knows what. As to the dedication, I cut out the parenthesis of *Mr.*,[94] but not another word shall move unless for a better. Mr. Moore has seen, and decidedly preferred the part your Tory bile sickens at. If every syllable were a rattlesnake, or every letter a pestilence, they should not be expunged.

Let those who cannot swallow chew the expressions on Ireland; or should even Mr. Croker array himself in all his terrors against them, I care for none of you, except Gifford; and he won't abuse me, except I deserve it — which will at least reconcile me to his justice. As to the poems in Hobhouse's volume, the translation from the Romaic is well enough; but the best of the other volume (of *mine*, I mean) have been already printed. But do as you please — only, as I shall be absent when you come out, *do*, *pray*, let Mr. *Dallas* and *you* have a care of the *press*.

"Yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

[" 1814, January 16.]

"I do believe that the devil never created or perverted such a fiend as the fool of a printer.[95] I am obliged to enclose you, *luckily* for me, this *second* proof, *corrected*, because there is an ingenuity in his blunders peculiar to himself. Let the press be guided by the present sheet.

" Yours, etc.

" *Burn the other.*

" Correct *this also* by the other in some things which I may have forgotten. There is one mistake he made which, if it had stood, I would most certainly have broken his neck."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"NEWSTEAD ABBEY, January 22, 1814.

"You will be glad to hear of my safe arrival here. The time of my return will depend upon the weather, which is so impracticable that this letter has to advance through more snows than ever opposed the emperor's retreat. The roads are impassable, and return impossible for the present; which I do not regret, as I am much at my ease, and *six and twenty* complete this day — a very pretty age, if it would always last. Our coals are excellent, our fireplaces large, my cellar full, and my head empty; and I have not yet recovered my joy at leaving London. If any unexpected turn occurred with my purchasers, I believe I should hardly quit the place at all; but shut my door, and let my beard grow.

"I forgot to mention (and I hope it is unnecessary) that the lines beginning, *Remember him*, etc., must *not* appear with 'The Corsair.' You may slip them in with the smaller pieces newly annexed to 'Childe Harold;' but on *no* account permit them to be appended to 'The Corsair.' Have the goodness to recollect this particularly.

"The books I have brought with me are a great consolation for the confinement, and I bought more as we came along. In short, I never consult the thermometer, and shall not put up prayers for a *thaw*, unless I thought it would sweep away the

rascally invaders of France. Was ever such a thing as Blucher's proclamation?

"Just before I left town, Kemble paid me the compliment of desiring me to write a *tragedy;* I wish I could, but I find my scribbling mood subsiding — not before it was time; but it is lucky to check it at all. If I lengthen my letter, you will think it is coming on again; so, good-bye.

"Yours alway, B.

"P. S. If you hear any news of battle or retreat on the part of the Allies (as they call them), pray send it. He has my best wishes to manure the fields of France with an *invading* army. I hate invaders of all countries, and have no patience with the cowardly cry of exultation over him, at whose name you all turned whiter than the snow to which you are indebted for your triumphs.

"I open my letter to thank you for yours just received. The 'Lines to a Lady Weeping' must go with 'The Corsair.' I care nothing for consequence, on this point. My politics are to me like a young mistress to an old man, — the worse they grow, the fonder I become of them. As Mr. Gifford likes the 'Portuguese Translation,'[96] pray insert it as an addition to 'The Corsair.'

"In all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and Mr. Dallas, let the first keep his place; and in all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and

Mr. Anybody-else, I shall abide by the former; if I am wrong, I can't help it. But I would rather not be right with any other person. So there is an end of that matter. After all the trouble he has taken about me and mine, I should be very ungrateful to feel or act otherwise. Besides, in point of judgment, he is not to be lowered by a comparison. In *politics*, he may be right, too; but that with me is a *feeling*, and I can't *torify* my nature."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"NEWSTEAD ABBEY, February 4, 1814.

"I need not say that your obliging letter was very welcome, and not the less so for being unexpected.

"It doubtless gratifies me much that our *finale* has pleased, and that the curtain drops gracefully.[97] *You* deserve it should, for your promptitude and good nature in arranging immediately with Mr. Dallas; and I can assure you that I esteem your entering so warmly into the subject, and writing to me so soon upon it, as a personal obligation. We shall now part, I hope, satisfied with each other. I *was* and *am* quite in earnest in my prefatory promise not to intrude any more; and this not from any affectation, but a thorough conviction that it is the best policy, and is at least respectful to my readers, as it shows that I would not willingly run the risk of forfeiting their favour in future. Besides, I have other views and objects,

and think that I shall keep this resolution; for since I left London, though shut up, *snow*-bound, *thaw*-bound, and tempted with all kinds of paper, the dirtiest of ink, and the bluntest of pens, I have not even been haunted by a wish to put them to their combined uses, except in letters of business. My rhyming propensity is quite gone, and I feel much as I did at Patras on recovering from my fever, — weak, but in health, and only afraid of a relapse. I do most fervently hope I never shall.

"I see by the *Morning Chronicle* there hath been discussion in the *Courier;* and I read in the *Morning Post* a wrathful letter about Mr. Moore, in which some Protestant reader has made a sad confusion about *India* and Ireland.

"You are to do as you please about the smaller poems; but I think removing them *now* from 'The Corsair' looks like *fear;* and if so, you must allow me not to be pleased. I should also suppose that, after the *fuss* of these newspaper esquires, they would materially assist the circulation of 'The Corsair;' an object I should imagine at *present* of more importance to *yourself* than 'Childe Harold's' seventh appearance. Do as you like; but don't allow the withdrawing that *poem* to draw any imputation of *dismay* upon me.

"Pray make my respects to Mr. Ward, whose praise I value most highly, as you well know; it is in the approbation of such men that fame becomes worth having. To Mr. Gifford I am always grate-

ful, and surely not less so now than ever. And so good night to my authorship.

"I have been sauntering and dozing here very quietly, and not unhappily. You will be happy to hear that I have completely established my title-deeds as marketable, and that the purchaser has succumbed to the terms, and fulfils them, or is to fulfil them forthwith. He is now here, and we go on very amicably together, — one in each *wing* of the Abbey. We set off on Sunday — I for town, he for Cheshire.

"Mrs. Leigh is with me — much pleased with the place, and less so with me for parting with it, to which not even the price can reconcile her. Your parcel has not yet arrived — at least the *Mags.*, etc.; but I have received 'Childe Harold' and 'The Corsair.'

"I believe both are very correctly printed, which is a great satisfaction.

"I thank you for wishing me in town; but I think one's success is most felt at a distance, and I enjoy my solitary self-importance in an agreeable sulky way of my own, upon the strength of your letter — for which I once more thank you, and am, very truly, etc.

"P. S. Don't you think Buonaparte's next *publication* will be rather expensive to the Allies? Perry's Paris letter of yesterday looks very reviving. What a Hydra and Briareus it is! I wish

they would pacify; there is no end to this campaigning."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"NEWSTEAD ABBEY, February 5, 1814.

"I quite forgot, in my answer of yesterday, to mention that I have no means of ascertaining whether the Newark *Pirate* has been doing what you say.[98] If so, he is a rascal, and a *shabby* rascal too; and if his offence is punishable by law or pugilism, he shall be fined or buffeted. Do you try and discover, and I will make some inquiry here. Perhaps some *other* in town may have gone on printing, and used the same deception.

"The *facsimile* is omitted in 'Childe Harold,' which is very awkward, as there is a *note* expressly on the subject. Pray *replace* it as *usual*.

"On second and third thoughts, the withdrawing the small poems from 'The Corsair' (even to add to 'Childe Harold') looks like shrinking and shuffling after the fuss made upon one of them by the Tories. Pray replace them in 'The Corsair's' appendix. I am sorry that 'Childe Harold' requires some and such abetments to make him move off; but, if you remember, I told you his popularity would not be permanent. It is very lucky for the author that he had made up his mind to a temporary reputation in time. The truth is, I do not think that any of the present day (and least of all, one who has not consulted the flattering side of

human nature) have much to hope from posterity; and you may think it affectation very probably, but, to me, my present and past success has appeared very singular, since it was in the teeth of so many prejudices. I almost think people like to be contradicted. If 'Childe Harold' flags, it will hardly be worth while to go on with the engravings; but do as you please; I have done with the whole concern; and the enclosed lines, written years ago, and copied from my skull-cap, are among the last with which you will be troubled. If you like, add them to 'Childe Harold,' if only for the sake of another outcry. You received so long an answer yesterday, that I will not intrude on you further than to repeat myself,

"Yours, etc.

"P. S. Of course, in reprinting (if you have occasion), you will take great care to be correct. The present editions seem very much so, except in the last note of 'Childe Harold,' where the word *responsible* occurs twice nearly together; correct the second into *answerable*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"NEWARK, February 6, 1814.

"I am thus far on my way to town. Master Ridge[99] I have seen, and he owns to having *reprinted* some *sheets*, to make up a few complete remaining copies! I have now given him fair

warning, and if he plays such tricks again, I must either get an injunction, or call for an account of profits (as I never have parted with the copyright), or, in short, anything vexatious, to repay him in his own way. If the weather does not relapse, I hope to be in town in a day or two. Yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 7, 1814.

"I see all the papers in a sad commotion with those eight lines; and the *Morning Post*, in particular, has found out that I am a sort of Richard III. — deformed in mind and *body*. The *last* piece of information is not very new to a man who passed five years at a public school.

"I am very sorry you cut out those lines for 'Childe Harold.' Pray reinsert them in their old place in 'The Corsair.'"

TO MR. HODGSON.

"February 28, 1814.

"There is a youngster, and a clever one, named Reynolds, who has just published a poem called 'Safie,' published by Cawthorn. He is in the most natural and fearful apprehension of the reviewers; and as you and I both know by experience the effect of such things upon a *young* mind, I wish *you* would take his production into dissection, and do it *gently*. *I* cannot, because it is inscribed to me; but I assure you this is not my motive for

wishing him to be tenderly entreated, but because I know the misery at his time of life, of untoward remarks upon first appearance.

"Now for *self*. Pray thank your *cousin* — it is just as it should be, to my liking, and probably *more* than will suit any one else's. I hope and trust that you are well and well doing. Peace be with you. Ever yours, my dear friend."

TO MR. MOORE.

"February 10, 1814.

"I arrived in town late yesterday evening, having been absent three weeks, which I passed in Notts. quietly and pleasantly. You can have no conception of the uproar the eight lines on the little royalty's weeping in 1812 (now republished) have occasioned. The r——, who had always thought them *yours*, chose, — God knows why, — on discovering them to be mine, to be *affected* 'in sorrow rather than anger.' The *Morning Post*, *Sun*, *Herald*, *Courier*, have all been in hysterics ever since. M. is in a fright, and wanted to shuffle; and the abuse against me in all directions is vehement, unceasing, loud — some of it good, and all of it hearty. I feel a little compunctious as to the r——'s *regret;* 'would he had been only angry! but I fear him not.'

"Some of these same assailments you have probably seen. My person (which is excellent for 'the nonce') has been denounced in verses, the more like the subject, inasmuch as they halt exceedingly.

Then, in another, I am an *atheist*, a *rebel*, and, at last, the *devil* (*boiteux*, I presume). My demonism seems to be a female's conjecture; if so, perhaps, I could convince her that I am but a mere mortal, — if a queen of the Amazons may be believed, who says αριστον χωλος οιφει. I quote from memory, so my Greek is probably deficient; but the passage is *meant* to mean . . .

"Seriously, I am in, what the learned call, a dilemma, and the vulgar, a scrape; and my friends desire me not to be in a passion; and, like Sir Fretful, I assure them that I am 'quite calm,' — but I am nevertheless in a fury.

"Since I wrote thus far, a friend has come in, and we have been talking and buffooning till I have quite lost the thread of my thoughts; and, as I won't send them unstrung to you, good morning, and Believe me ever, etc.

"P. S. Murray, during my absence, *omitted* the Tears in several of the copies. I have made him replace them, and am very wroth with his qualms, — 'as the wine is poured out, let it be drunk to the dregs.'"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 10, 1814.

"I am much better, and indeed quite well, this morning. I have received *two*, but I presume there are more of the *Ana*, subsequently, and also some-

thing previous, to which the *Morning Chronicle* replied. You also mentioned a parody on the *Skull*. I wish to see them all, because there may be things that require notice either by pen or person.

"Yours, etc.

"You need not trouble yourself to answer this; but send me the things when you get them."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 12, 1814.

"If you have copies of the 'Intercepted Letters,' Lady Holland would be glad of a volume; and when you have served others, have the goodness to think of your humble servant.

"You have played the devil by that injudicious *suppression*, which you did totally without my consent. Some of the papers have exactly said what might be expected. Now I *do* not, and *will* not be supposed to shrink, although myself and everything belonging to me were to perish with my memory. Yours, etc. BN.

"P. S. Pray attend to what I stated yesterday on *technical* topics."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Monday, February 14, 1814.

"Before I left town yesterday, I wrote you a note, which I presume you received. I have heard

so many different accounts of *your* proceedings, or rather of those of others toward *you*, in consequence of the publication of these everlasting lines, that I am anxious to hear from yourself the real state of the case. Whatever responsibility, obloquy, or effect is to arise from the publication, should surely *not* fall upon you in any degree; and I can have no objection to your stating, as distinctly and publicly as you please, *your* unwillingness to publish them, and my own obstinacy upon the subject. Take any course you please to vindicate *yourself*, but leave me to fight my own way; and, as I before said, do not *compromise* me by anything which may look like *shrinking* on *my* part; as for your own, make the best of it. Yours,

"BN."

TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 16, 1814.

"MY DEAR ROGERS: — I wrote to Lord Holland briefly, but I hope distinctly, on the subject which has lately occupied much of my conversation with him and you.[100] As things now stand, upon that topic my determination must be unalterable.

"I declare to you most sincerely that there is no human being on whose regard and esteem I set a higher value than on Lord Holland's; and, as far as concerns himself, I would concede even to humiliation, without any view to the future, and solely from my sense of his conduct as to the past.

For the rest, I conceive that I have already done all in my power by the suppression.[101] If that is not enough, they must act as they please; but I will not 'teach my tongue a most inherent baseness,' come what may. You will probably be at the Marquis Lansdowne's to-night. I am asked, but I am not sure that I shall be able to go. Hobhouse will be there. I think, if you knew him well, you would like him.

"Believe me always yours very affectionately,

"B."

TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 16, 1814.

"If Lord Holland is satisfied, as far as regards himself and Lady Hd., and as this letter expresses him to be, it is enough.

"As for any impression the public may receive from the revival of the lines on Lord Carlisle, let them keep it, — the more favourable for him, and the worse for me, better for all.

"All the sayings and doings in the world shall not make me utter another word of conciliation to anything that breathes. I shall bear what I can, and what I cannot I shall resist. The worst they could do would be to exclude me from society. I have never courted it, nor, I may add, in the general sense of the word, enjoyed it — and 'there is a world elsewhere!'

"Anything remarkably injurious, I have the same means of repaying as other men, with such interest as circumstances may annex to it.

"Nothing but the necessity of adhering to regimen prevents me from dining with you to-morrow.

"I am yours most truly,

"Bn."

TO MR. MOORE.

"February 16, 1814.

"You may be assured that the only prickles that sting from the royal hedgehog are those which possess a torpedo property, and may benumb some of my friends. *I* am quite silent, and 'hush'd in grim repose.' The frequency of the assaults has weakened their effects, — if ever they had any; and, if they had had much, I should hardly have held my tongue, or withheld my fingers. It is something quite new to attack a man for abandoning his resentments. I have heard that previous praise and subsequent vituperation were rather ungrateful, but I did not know that it was wrong to endeavour to do justice to those who did not wait till I had made some amends for former and boyish prejudices, but received me into their friendship, when I might still have been their enemy.

"You perceive justly that I must *intentionally* have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead. It were better if there were more merit in my in-

dependence, but it really is something nowadays to be independent at all, and the *less* temptation to be otherwise, the more uncommon the case, in these times of paradoxical servility. I believe that most of our hates and likings have been hitherto nearly the same; but from henceforth they must, of necessity, be one and indivisible, — and now for it! I am for any weapon, — the pen, till one can find something sharper, will do for a beginning.

"You can have no conception of the ludicrous solemnity with which these two stanzas have been treated. The *Morning Post* gave notice of an intended motion in the House of my brethren on the subject, and God he knows what proceedings besides; and all this, as Bedreddin in the 'Nights' says, 'for making a cream tart without pepper.' This last piece of intelligence is, I presume, too laughable to be true; and the destruction of the custom house appears to have, in some degree, interfered with mine; added to which, the last battle of Buonaparte has usurped the column hitherto devoted to my bulletin.

"I send you from this day's *Morning Post* the best which have hitherto appeared on this 'impudent doggerel,' as the *Courier* calls it. There was another about my *diet*, when a boy — not at all bad — some time ago; but the rest are but indifferent.

"I shall think about your *oratorical* hint;[102] but I have never set much upon 'that cast,' and am

grown as tired as Solomon of everything, and of myself more than anything. This is being what the learned call philosophical, and the vulgar lack-a-daisical. I am, however, always glad of a blessing;[103] pray, repeat yours soon, — at least your letter, and I shall think the benediction included.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. DALLAS.

"February 17, 1814.

"The *Courier* of this evening accuses me of having 'received and pocketed' large sums for my works. I have never yet received, nor wish to receive, a farthing for any. Mr. Murray offered a thousand for 'The Giaour' and 'Bride of Abydos,' which I said was too much, and that if he could afford it at the end of six months, I would then direct how it might be disposed of; but neither then, nor at any other period, have I ever availed myself of the profits on my own account. For the republication of the Satire I refused four hundred guineas; and for the previous editions I never asked nor received a *sous*, nor for any writing whatever. I do not wish you to do anything disagreeable to yourself; there never was nor shall be any conditions nor stipulations with regard to any accommodation that I could afford you; and, on your part, I can see nothing derogatory in receiving the copyright. It was only assist-

ance afforded to a worthy man, by one not quite so worthy.

"Mr. Murray is going to contradict this;[104] but your *name* will not be mentioned; for your own part, you are a free agent, and are to do as you please. I only hope that now, as always, you will think that I wish to take no unfair advantage of the accidental opportunity which circumstances permitted me of being of use to you.

"Ever," etc.

In consequence of this letter, Mr. Dallas addressed an explanation to one of the newspapers, of which the following is a part; the remainder being occupied with a rather clumsily managed defence of his noble benefactor on the subject of the stanzas.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

"Sir: — I have seen the paragraph in an evening paper, in which Lord Byron is *accused* of 'receiving and pocketing' large sums for his works. I believe no one who knows him has the slightest suspicion of this kind; but the assertion being public, I think it a justice I owe to Lord Byron to contradict it publicly. I address this letter to you for that purpose, and I am happy that it gives me an opportunity at this moment to make some observations which I have for several days been anxious to do publicly, but from which

I have been restrained by an apprehension that I should be suspected of being prompted by his lordship.

"I take upon me to affirm, that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge, the profits of the Satire were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' I have already publicly acknowledged in the dedication of the new edition of my novels; and I now add my acknowledgment for that of 'The Corsair' not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it while yet unpublished. With respect to his two other poems, 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos,' Mr. Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of them has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot but express my surprise that it should ever be deemed a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this; for what difference does it make in honour and noble feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed, in beneficent purposes? I differ with my Lord Byron on this subject as well as some others; and he has constantly, both by word and action, shown his aversion to receiving money for his productions."

TO MR. MOORE.

"February 26, 1814.

"Dallas had, perhaps, have better kept silence; but that was *his* concern, and, as his facts are correct, and his motive not dishonourable to himself, I wished him well through it. As for his interpretations of the lines, he and any one else may interpret them as they please. I have and shall adhere to my taciturnity, unless something very particular occurs to render this impossible. Do *not you* say a word. If any one is to speak, it is the person principally concerned. The most amusing thing is, that every one (to me) attributes the abuse to the *man they personally most dislike!* — some say C——r, some C——e, others F——d, etc. I do not know, and have no clue but conjecture. If discovered, and he turns out a hireling, he must be left to his wages; if a cavalier, he must 'wink, and hold out his iron.'

"I had some thoughts of putting the question to C——r, but H., who, I am sure, would not dissuade me if it were right, advised me by all means *not*, — 'that I had no right to take it upon suspicion,' etc. Whether H. is correct I am not aware, but he believes himself so, and says there can be but one opinion on that subject. This I am, at least, sure of, that he would never prevent me from doing what he deemed the duty of a *preux* chevalier. In such cases — at least, in this country — we must

act according to usages. In considering this instance, I dismiss my own personal feelings. Any man will and must fight, when necessary, — even without a motive. *Here*, I should take it up really without much resentment; for, unless a woman one likes is in the way, it is some years since I felt a *long* anger. But, undoubtedly, could I, or may I, trace it to a man of station, I should and shall do what is proper.

"——— was angerly, but tried to conceal it. *You* are not called upon to avow the 'Twopenny,' and would only gratify them by so doing. Do you not see the great object of all these fooleries is to set him, and you, and me, and all persons whatsoever, by the ears? — more especially those who are on good terms, — and nearly succeeded. Lord H. wished me to *concede* to Lord Carlisle — concede to the devil! — to a man who used me ill? I told him, in answer, that I would neither concede, nor recede on the subject, but be silent altogether; unless anything more could be said about Lady H. and himself, who had been since my very good friends; and there it ended. This was no time for concessions to Lord C.

"I have been interrupted, but shall write again soon. Believe me ever, my dear Moore," etc.

Another of his friends having expressed, soon after, some intention of volunteering publicly in

his defence, he lost no time in repressing him by the following sensible letter:

TO W—— W——, ESQ.

"February 28, 1814.

"MY DEAR W.:—I have but a few moments to write to you. *Silence* is the only answer to the things you mention; nor should I regard that man as my friend who said a word more on the subject. I care little for attacks, but I will not submit to *defences;* and I do hope and trust that *you* have never entertained a serious thought of engaging in so foolish a controversy. Dallas's letter was, to his credit, merely as to facts which he had a right to state; *I* neither have nor shall take the least *public* notice, nor permit any one else to do so. If I discover the writer, then I may act in a different manner; but it will not be in writing.

"An expression in your letter has induced me to write this to you, to entreat you not to interfere in any way in such a business,—it is now nearly over, and depend upon it, *they* are much more chagrined by my silence than they could be by the best defence in the world. I do not know anything that would vex me more than any further reply to these things.

"Ever yours, in haste,

"B."

TO MR. MOORE.

"March 3, 1814.

"My dear Friend: — I have a great mind to tell you that I *am* 'uncomfortable,' if only to make you come to town; where no one ever more delighted in seeing you, nor is there any one to whom I would sooner turn for consolation in my most vapourish moments. The truth is, I have 'no lack of argument' to ponder upon of the most gloomy description, but this arises from *other* causes. Some day or other, when we are *veterans*, I may tell you a tale of present and past times; and it is not from want of confidence that I do not now, — but — but — always a *but* to the end of the chapter.

"There is nothing, however, upon the *spot* either to love or hate; but I certainly have subjects for both at no very great distance, and am besides embarrassed between *three* whom I know, and one (whose name, at least) I do not know. All this would be very well if I had no heart; but, unluckily, I have found that there is such a thing still about me, though in no very good repair, and, also, that it has a habit of attaching itself to *one* whether I will or no. 'Divide et impera,' I begin to think, will only do for politics.

"If I discover the 'toad' as you call him, I shall 'tread,' — and put spikes in my shoes to do it more effectually. The effect of all these fine things I do not inquire much nor perceive. I believe

——— felt them more than either of us. People are civil enough, and I have had no dearth of invitations, — none of which, however, I have accepted. I went out very little last year, and mean to go about still less. I have no passion for circles, and have long regretted that I ever gave way to what is called a town life, — which, of all the lives I ever saw (and they are nearly as many as Plutarch's) seems to me to leave the least for the past and future.

"How proceeds the poem? Do not neglect it, and I have no fears. I need not say to you that your fame is dear to me, — I really might say *dearer* than my own; for I have lately begun to think my things have been strangely overrated, and, at any rate, whether or not, I have done with them for ever. I may say to you what I would not say to everybody, that the last two were written, 'The Bride' in four, and 'The Corsair' in ten days,[105] — which I take to be a most humiliating confession, as it proves my own want of judgment in publishing, and the public's in reading things which cannot have stamina for permanent attention. 'So much for Buckingham.'

"I have no dread of your being too hasty, and I have still less of your failing. But I think a *year* a very fair allotment of time to a composition which is not to be epic; and even Horace's 'Nonum prematur' must have been intended for the millennium, or some longer-lived generation than ours.

I wonder how much we should have had of *him*, had he observed his own doctrines to the letter. Peace be with you! Remember that I am always and most truly yours, etc.

"P. S. I never heard the 'report' you mention, nor, I dare say, many others. But, in course, you as well as others, have 'damned good-natured friends,' who do their duty in the usual way. One thing will make you laugh. . . . "

TO MR. MOORE.

"March 12, 1814.

"Guess darkly, and you will seldom err. At present, I shall say no more, and, perhaps — but no matter. I hope we shall some day meet, and whatever years may precede or succeed it, I shall mark it with the 'white stone' in my calendar. I am not sure that I shall not soon be in your neighbourhood again. If so, and I am alone (as will probably be the case), I shall invade and carry you off, and endeavour to atone for sorry fare by a sincere welcome. I don't know the person absent (barring 'the sect') I should be so glad to see again.

"I have nothing of the sort you mention but *the lines* (the Weepers), if you like to have them in the Bag. I wish to give them all possible circulation. The 'Vault' reflection is downright actionable, and to print it would be peril to the publisher: but I think the Tears have a natural right to be bagged,

and the editor (whoever he may be) might supply a facetious note or not, as he pleased.

"I cannot conceive how the 'Vault'[106] has got about, — but so it is. It is too *farouche;* but, truth to say, my satires are not very playful. I have the plan of an epistle in my head, *at* him and *to* him; and, if they are not a little quieter, I shall embody it. I should say little or nothing of *myself.* As to mirth and ridicule, that is out of my way; but I have a tolerable fund of sternness and contempt, and, with Juvenal before me, I shall perhaps read him a lecture he has not lately heard in the C——t. From particular circumstances, which came to my knowledge almost by accident, I could 'tell him what he is — I know him well.'

"I meant, my dear M., to write to you a long letter, but I am hurried, and time clips my inclination down to yours, etc.

"P. S. *Think again* before you *shelf* your poem. There is a youngster (older than me, by the by, but a younger poet), Mr. G. Knight, with a vol. of Eastern Tales, written since his return, — for he has been in the countries. He sent to me last summer, and I advised him to write one in *each measure*, without any intention, at that time, of doing the same thing. Since that, from a habit of writing in a fever, I have anticipated him in the variety of measures, but quite unintentionally. Of the stories, I know nothing, not having seen them,[107]

but *he* has some lady in a sack, too, like 'The Giaour, he told me at the time.

"The best way to make the public 'forget' me is to remind them of yourself. You cannot suppose that *I* would ask you or advise you to publish, if I thought you would *fail*. I really have *no* literary envy; and I do not believe a friend's success ever sat nearer another than yours do to my best wishes. It is for *elderly gentlemen* to 'bear no brother near,' and cannot become our disease for more years than we may perhaps number. I wish you to be out before Eastern subjects are again before the public."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"March 12, 1814.

"I have not time to read the whole MS.,[108] but what I have seen seems very well written (both *prose* and *verse*), and, though I am and can be no judge (at least a *fair* one on this subject), containing nothing which you *ought* to hesitate publishing upon *my* account. If the author is not Doctor *Busby* himself, I think it a pity, on his *own* account, that he should dedicate it to his subscribers; nor can I perceive what Doctor Busby has to do with the matter except as a translator of Lucretius, for whose doctrines he is surely not responsible. I tell you openly, and really most sincerely, that, if published at all, there is no earthly reason why you should *not;* on the con-

trary, I should receive it as the greatest compliment *you* could pay to your good opinion of my candour, to print and circulate that or any other work attacking me in a manly manner, and without any malicious intention, from which, as far as I have seen, I must exonerate this writer.

"He is wrong in one thing—*I* am no *atheist;* but if he thinks I have published principles tending to such opinions, he has a perfect right to controvert them. Pray publish it; I shall never forgive myself if I think that I have prevented you.

"Make my compliments to the author, and tell him I wish him success; his verse is very deserving of it; and I shall be the last person to suspect his motives. Yours, etc.

"P. S. If *you* do not publish it, some one else will. You cannot suppose me so narrow-minded as to shrink from discussion. I repeat once for all, that I think it a good poem (as far as I have redde); and that is the only point *you* should consider. How odd that *eight lines* should have given birth, I really think, to *eight thousand*, including *all* that has been said, and will be on the subject!"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 9, 1814.

"All these news are very fine; but nevertheless I want my books, if you can find, or cause them to

be found for me, — if only to lend them to Napoleon, in 'the Island of Elba,' during his retirement. I also (if convenient, and you have no party with you) should be glad to speak with you, for a few minutes, this evening, as I have had a letter from Mr. Moore, and wish to ask you, as the best judge, of the best time for him to publish the work he has composed. I need not say, that I have his success much at heart; not only because he is my friend, but something much better — a man of great talent, of which he is less sensible than I believe any even of his enemies. If you can so far oblige me as to step down, do so; and if you are otherwise occupied, say nothing about it. I shall find you at home in the course of next week.

"P. S. I see Sotheby's tragedies advertised. The 'Death of Darnley' is a famous subject — one of the best, I should think, for the drama. Pray let me have a copy when ready.

"Mrs. Leigh was very much pleased with her books and desires me to thank you; she means, I believe, to write to you her acknowledgments."

TO MR. MOORE.

"2 ALBANY, April 9, 1814.

"Viscount Althorp is about to be married, and I have gotten his spacious bachelor apartments in Albany, to which you will, I hope, address a speedy answer to this mine epistle.

"I am but just returned to town, from which you may infer that I have been out of it; and I have been boxing, for exercise, with Jackson for this last month daily. I have also been drinking, and, on one occasion, with three other friends at the Cocoa Tree, from six till four, yea, unto five in the matin. We clareted and champagned till two — then supped, and finished with a kind of regency punch composed of Madeira, brandy, and *green* tea, no *real* water being admitted therein. There was a night for you! without once quitting the table, except to ambulate home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a hackney-coach and my own *vis*, both of which were deemed necessary for our conveyance. And so, — I am very well, and they say it will hurt my constitution.

"I have also, more or less, been breaking a few of the favourite commandments; but I mean to pull up and marry, if any one will have me. In the meantime, the other day I nearly killed myself with a collar of brawn, which I swallowed for supper, and *in*digested for I don't know how long; but that is by the by. All this gourmandise was in honour of Lent; for I am forbidden meat all the rest of the year, but it is strictly enjoined me during your solemn fast. I have been, and am, in very tolerable love; but of that hereafter as it may be.

"My dear Moore, say what you will in your preface; and quiz anything or anybody, — me if you

like it. Oons! dost thou think me of the *old*, or rather *elderly*, school? If one can't jest with one's friends, with whom can we be facetious? You have nothing to fear from ———, whom I have not seen, being out of town when he called. He will be very correct, smooth, and all that, but I doubt whether there will be any 'grace beyond the reach of art;' and, whether there is or not, how long will you be so d——d modest? As for Jeffrey, it is a very handsome thing of him to speak well of an old antagonist, — and what a mean mind dared not do. Any one will revoke praise; but — were it not partly my own case — I should say that very few have strength of mind to unsay their censure, or follow it up with praise of other things.

"What think you of the review of *Levis?* It beats the Bag and my hand-grenade hollow, as an invective, and hath thrown the court into hysterics, as I hear from very good authority. Have you heard from ———?

"No more rhyme for — or, rather, *from* — me. I have taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will mountebank it no longer. I have had my day, and there's an end. The utmost I expect, or even wish, is to have it said in the Biographia Britannica that I might perhaps have been a poet, had I gone on and amended. My great comfort is, that the temporary celebrity I have wrung from the world has been in the very teeth of all opinions and prejudices. I have flattered no ruling powers;

I have never concealed a single thought that tempted me. They can't say I have truckled to the times, nor to popular topics (as Johnson, or somebody, said of Cleveland), and whatever I have gained has been at the expenditure of as much *personal* favour as possible; for I do believe never was a bard more unpopular, *quoad homo*, than myself. And now I have done, — 'ludite nunc alios.' Everybody may be d——d, as they seem fond of it, and resolve to stickle lustily for endless brimstone.

"Oh — by the by, I had nearly forgot. There is a long poem, an 'Anti-Byron,' coming out, to prove that I have formed a conspiracy to overthrow, by *rhyme*, all religion and government, and have already made great progress! It is not very scurrilous, but serious and ethereal. I never felt myself important, till I saw and heard of my being such a little Voltaire as to induce such a production. Murray would not publish it, for which he was a fool, and so I told him; but some one else will, doubtless. 'Something too much of this.'

"Your French scheme is good, but let it be *Italian;* all the Angles will be at Paris. Let it be Rome, Milan, Naples, Florence, Turin, Venice, or Switzerland, and 'egad!' (as Bayes saith) I will connubiate and join you; and we will write a new 'Inferno' in our Paradise. Pray think of this — and I will really buy a wife and a ring, and say

the ceremony, and settle near you in a summer-house upon the Arno, or the Po, or the Adriatic.

"Ah! my poor little pagod, Napoleon, has walked off his pedestal. He has abdicated, they say. This would draw molten brass from the eyes of Zatanai. What! 'kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet, and then be baited by the rabble's curse!' I cannot bear such a crouching catastrophe. I must stick to Sylla, for my modern favourites don't do, — their resignations are of a different kind. All health and prosperity, my dear Moore. Excuse this lengthy letter. Ever, etc.

"P. S. The *Quarterly* quotes you frequently in an article on America; and everybody I know asks perpetually after you and yours. When will you answer them in person?"

He did not long persevere in his resolution against writing, as will be seen from the following notes to his publisher.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 10, 1814.

"I have written an ode on the fall of Napoleon, which, if you like, I will copy out, and make you a present of. Mr. Merivale has seen part of it, and likes it. You may show it to Mr. Gifford, and print it, or not, as you please — it is of no consequence. It contains nothing in *his* favour, and no

allusion whatever to our own government or the Bourbons. Yours, etc.

"P. S. It is in the measure of my stanzas at the end of 'Childe Harold,' which were much liked, beginning 'And thou art dead,' etc. There are ten stanzas of it — ninety lines in all."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 11, 1814.

"I enclose you a letter*et* from Mrs. Leigh.

"It will be best *not* to put my name to our *ode;* but you may *say* as openly as you like that it is mine, and I can inscribe it to Mr. Hobhouse, from the *author*, which will mark it sufficiently. After the resolution of not publishing, though it is a thing of little length and less consequence, it will be better altogether that it is anonymous; but we will incorporate it in the first *tome* of ours that you find time or the wish to publish.

"Yours alway, B.

"P. S. I hope you got a note of alterations, sent this matin?

"P. S. Oh, my books! my books! will you never find my books?

"Alter '*potent* spell' to '*quickening* spell:' the first (as Polonius says) 'is a vile phrase,' and means nothing, besides being commonplace and *Rosa-Matilda-ish.*"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 12, 1814.

"I send you a few notes and trifling alterations, and an additional motto from Gibbon, which you will find *singularly appropriate*. A 'Good-natured Friend' tells me there is a most scurrilous attack on *us* in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, which you have *not* sent. Send it, as I am in that state of languor which will derive benefit from getting into a passion. Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"Albany, April 20, 1814.

"I *am* very glad to hear that you are to be transient from Mayfield so very soon, and was taken in by the first part of your letter.[109] Indeed, for aught I know, you may be treating me, as Slipslop says, with 'ironing' even now. I shall say nothing of the *shock*, which had nothing of *humeur* in it; as I am apt to take even a critic, and still more a friend, at his word, and never to doubt that I have been writing cursed nonsense, if they say so. There was a mental reservation in my pact with the public,[110] in behalf of *anonymes;* and, even had there not, the provocation was such as to make it physically impossible to pass over this damnable epoch of triumphant tameness. 'Tis a cursed business; and, after all, I shall think higher of rhyme and reason, and very humbly of your

heroic people, till — Elba becomes a volcano, and sends him out again. I can't think it all over yet.

"My departure for the Continent depends, in some measure, on the *in*continent. I have two country invitations at home, and don't know what to say or do. In the meantime, I have bought a macaw and a parrot, and have got up my books; and I box and fence daily, and go out very little.

"At this present writing, Louis the Gouty is wheeling in triumph into Piccadilly, in all the pomp and rabblement of royalty. I had an offer of seats to see them pass; but, as I have seen a Sultan going to mosque, and been at *his* reception of an ambassador, the most Christian King 'hath no attractions for me;' though in some coming year of the Hegira, I should not dislike to see the place where he *had* reigned, shortly after the second revolution, and a happy sovereignty of two months, the last six weeks being civil war.

"Pray write, and deem me ever," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 21, 1814.

"Many thanks with the letters which I return. You know I am a Jacobin, and could not wear white, nor see the installation of Louis the Gouty.

"This is sad news, and very hard upon the sufferers at any, but more at *such* a time — I mean the Bayonne sortie.

"You should urge Moore to come *out*.

"P. S. I want *Moreri* to purchase for good and all. I have a Bayle, but want Moreri too.

"P. S. Perry hath a piece of compliment to-day; but I think the *name* might have been as well omitted. No matter; they can but throw the old story of inconsistency in my teeth — let them, — I mean, as to not publishing. However, *now* I will keep my word. Nothing but the occasion, which was *physically* irresistible, made me swerve; and I thought an *anonyme* within my *pact* with the public. It is the only thing I have or shall set about."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 25, 1814.

"Let Mr. Gifford have the letter and return it at his leisure. I would have offered it, had I thought that he liked things of the kind.

"Do you want the last page *immediately!* I have doubts about the lines being worth printing; at any rate, I must see them again and alter some passages, before they go forth in any shape into the *ocean* of circulation, — a very conceited phrase, by the by: well then — *channel* of publication will do.

"'I am not i' the vein,' or I could knock off a stanza or three for the ode, that might answer the purpose better.[111] At all events, I *must* see the lines again *first*, as there be two I have altered in my mind's manuscript already. Has any one seen or judged of them? that is the criterion by which

I will abide — only give me a *fair* report, and 'nothing extenuate,' as I will in that case do something else.

"Ever, etc.

"I want *Moreri*, and an *Athenæus*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 26, 1814.

"I have been thinking that it might be as well to publish no more of the ode separately, but incorporate it with any of the other things, and include the smaller poem, too (in that case) — which I must previously correct, nevertheless. I can't, for the head of me, add a line worth scribbling; my 'vein' is quite gone, and my present occupations are of the gymnastic order — boxing and fencing — and my principal conversation is with my macaw and Bayle. I want my Moreri, and I want Athenæus.

"P. S. I hope you sent back that poetical packet to the address which I forwarded to you on Sunday; if not, pray do, or I shall have the author screaming after his epic."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 26, 1814.

"I have no guess at your author; but it is a noble poem,[112] and worth a thousand odes of any-

body's. I suppose I may keep this copy; after reading it, I really regret having written my own. I say this very sincerely, albeit unused to think humbly of myself.

"I don't like the additional stanzas *at all*, and they had better be left out. The fact is, I can't do anything I am asked to do, however gladly I *would;* and at the end of a week my interest in a composition goes off. This will account to you for my doing no better for your 'Stamp Duty' postscript.

"The S. R. is very civil — but what do they mean by 'Childe Harold' resembling 'Marmion?' and the next two, 'Giaour' and 'Bride,' *not* resembling Scott? I certainly never intended to copy him; but, if there is any copyism, it must be in the two poems, where the same versification is adopted. However, they exempt 'The Corsair' from all resemblance to anything, though I rather wonder at his escape.

"If ever I did anything original, it was in 'Childe Harold,' which *I* prefer to the other things always, after the first week. Yesterday I re-read 'English Bards;' bating the *malice*, it is the *best*.

"Ever," etc.

A resolution was, about this time, adopted by him, which, however strange and precipitate it appeared, a knowledge of the previous state of his mind may enable us to account for satisfactorily. He had now, for two years, been drawing upon the

admiration of the public with a rapidity and success which seemed to defy exhaustion, — having crowded, indeed, into that brief interval the materials of a long life of fame. But admiration is a sort of impost from which most minds are but too willing to relieve themselves. The eye grows weary of looking up to the same object of wonder, and begins to exchange, at last, the delight of observing its elevation for the less generous pleasure of watching and speculating on its fall. The reputation of Lord Byron had already begun to experience some of these consequences of its own prolonged and constantly renewed splendour. Even among that host of admirers who would have been the last to find fault, there were some not unwilling to repose from praise; while they, who had been from the first reluctant eulogists, took advantage of these apparent symptoms of satiety to indulge in blame.[113]

The loud outcry raised, at the beginning of the present year, by his verses to the Princess Charlotte, had afforded a vent for much of this reserved venom; and the tone of disparagement in which some of his assailants now affected to speak of his poetry was, however absurd and contemptible in itself, precisely that sort of attack which was the most calculated to wound his at once proud and diffident spirit. As long as they confined themselves to blackening his moral and social character, so far from offending, their libels rather fell in with his own shadowy

style of self-portraiture, and gratified the strange inverted ambition that possessed him. But the slighting opinion which they ventured to express of his genius — seconded as it was by that inward dissatisfaction with his own powers, which they whose standard of excellence is highest are always the surest to feel — mortified and disturbed him; and, being the first sounds of ill augury that had come across his triumphal career, startled him, as we have seen, into serious doubts of its continuance.

Had he been occupying himself, at the time, with any new task, that confidence in his own energies, which he never truly felt but while in the actual exercise of them, would have enabled him to forget these humiliations of the moment in the glow and excitement of anticipated success. But he had just pledged himself to the world to take a long farewell of poesy, — had sealed up that only fountain from which his heart ever drew refreshment or strength, — and thus was left, idly and helplessly, to brood over the daily taunts of his enemies, without the power of avenging himself when they insulted his person, and but too much disposed to agree with them when they made light of his genius. "I am afraid (he says, in noticing these attacks in one of his letters), what you call *trash* is plaguily to the purpose, and very good sense into the bargain; and, to tell the truth, for some little time past, I have been myself much of the same opinion."

In this sensitive state of mind, — which he but ill disguised or relieved by an exterior of gay defiance or philosophic contempt, — we can hardly feel surprised that he should have, all at once, come to the resolution, not only of persevering in his determination to write no more in future, but of purchasing back the whole of his past copyrights, and suppressing every page and line he had ever written. On his first mention of this design, Mr. Murray naturally doubted as to its seriousness: but the arrival of the following letter, enclosing a draft for the amount of the copyrights, put his intentions beyond question.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"2 ALBANY, April 29, 1814.

"DEAR SIR: — I enclose a draft for the money; when paid, send the copyright. I release you from the thousand pounds agreed on for 'The Giaour' and 'Bride,' and there's an end.

"If any accident occurs to me, you may do then as you please; but, with the exception of two copies of each for *yourself* only, I expect and request that the advertisements be withdrawn, and the remaining copies of *all* destroyed; and any expense so incurred I will be glad to defray.

"For all this, it might be as well to assign some reason. I have none to give, except my own caprice, and I do not consider the circumstances of consequence enough to require explanation.

"In course, I need hardly assure you that they never shall be published with my consent, directly, or indirectly, by any other person whatsoever, — that I am perfectly satisfied, and have every reason so to be, with your conduct in all transactions between us as publisher and author.

"It will give me great pleasure to preserve your acquaintance, and to consider you as my friend. Believe me very truly, and for much attention,

"Your obliged and very obedient servant,

BYRON.

"P. S. I do not think that I have overdrawn at Hammersley's; but if *that* be the case, I can draw for the superflux on Hoare's. The draft is £5 short, but that I will make up. On payment — *not* before — return the copyright papers."

In such a conjuncture, an appeal to his good nature and considerateness was, as Mr. Murray well judged, his best resource; and the following prompt reply will show how easily, and at once, it succeeded.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"May 1, 1814.

"DEAR SIR: — If your present note is serious, and it really would be inconvenient, there is an end of the matter; tear my draft, and go on as usual: in that case, we will recur to our former basis. That *I* was perfectly *serious*, in wishing to suppress

all future publication, is true; but certainly not to interfere with the convenience of others, and more particularly your own. Some day, I will tell you the reason of this apparently strange resolution. At present, it may be enough to say that I recall it at your suggestion, and as it appears to have annoyed you, I lose no time in saying so.

"Yours truly, B."

During my stay in town this year, we were almost daily together; and it is in no spirit of flattery to the dead I say, that the more intimately I became acquainted with his disposition and character, the more warmly I felt disposed to take an interest in everything that concerned him. Not that, in the opportunities thus afforded me of observing more closely his defects, I did not discover much to lament, and not a little to condemn. But there was still, in the neighbourhood of even his worst faults, some atoning good quality, which was always sure, if brought kindly and with management into play, to neutralise their ill effects. The very frankness, indeed, with which he avowed his errors seemed to imply a confidence in his own power of redeeming them, — a consciousness that he could afford to be sincere. There was also, in such entire unreserve, a pledge that nothing worse remained behind; and the same quality that laid open the blemishes of his nature gave security for its honesty. "The cleanness and purity of one's mind," says

Pope, "is never better proved than in discovering its own faults, at first view; as when a stream shows the dirt at its bottom, it shows also the transparency of the water."

The theatre was, at this time, his favourite place of resort. We have seen how enthusiastically he expresses himself on the subject of Mr. Kean's acting, and it was frequently my good fortune, during this season, to share in his enjoyment of it, — the orchestra being more than once the place where, for a nearer view of the actor's countenance, we took our station. For Kean's benefit, on the 25th of May, a large party had been made by Lady J——, to which we both belonged; but Lord Byron having also taken a box for the occasion, so anxious was he to enjoy the representation uninterrupted, that, by rather an unsocial arrangement, only himself and I occupied his box during the play, while every other in the house was crowded almost to suffocation; nor did we join the remainder of our friends till supper. Between the two parties, however, Mr. Kean had no reason to complain of a want of homage to his talents; as Lord J——, on that occasion, presented him with a hundred-pound share in the theatre; while Lord Byron sent him, next day, the sum of fifty guineas;[114] and, not long after, on seeing him act some of his favourite parts, made him presents of a handsome snuff-box and a costly Turkish sword.

Such effect had the passionate energy of Kean's acting on his mind, that, once, in seeing him play Sir Giles Overreach, he was so affected as to be seized with a sort of convulsive fit; and we shall find him, some years after, in Italy, when the representation of Alfieri's tragedy of "Mirra" had agitated him in the same violent manner, comparing the two instances as the only ones in his life when "anything under reality" had been able to move him so powerfully.

The following are a few of the notes which I received from him during this visit to town.

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 4, 1814.

"Last night we supp'd at R——fe's board, etc.[115]

"I wish people would not shirk their *dinners* — ought it not to have been a dinner?[116] — and that d——d anchovy sandwich!

"That plaguy voice of yours made me sentimental, and almost fall in love with a girl who was recommending herself, during your song, by *hating* music. But the song is past, and my passion can wait, till the *pucelle* is more harmonious.

"Do you go to Lady Jersey's to-night? It is a large party, and you won't be bored into 'softening rocks,' and all that. 'Othello' is to-morrow and Saturday too. Which day shall we go? when

shall I see you? If you call, let it be after three, and as near four as you please.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 4, 1814.

"DEAR TOM: — Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose you an experiment, which has cost me something more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to be worth your taking any in your proposed setting.[117] Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without *phrase*.

"Ever yours,

"BYRON.

"I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame;
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

"Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace
Were those hours — can their joy or their bitterness cease?
We repent — we abjure — we will break from our chain —
We will part, — we will fly to — unite it again!

"Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
Forgive me, adored one! — forsake, if thou wilt; —
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
And *man* shall not break it — whatever *thou* mayst.

"And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
This soul, in its bitterest darkness shall be;
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

"One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign —
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*."

TO MR. MOORE.

"Will you and Rogers come to my box at Covent, then? I shall be there, and none else — or I won't be there, if you *twain* would like to go without me. You will not get so good a place hustling among the publican *boxers*, with damnable apprentices (six feet high) on a back row. Will you both oblige me and come, — or one — or neither — or, what you will?

"P. S. An' you will, I will call for you at half-past six, or any time of your own dial."

TO MR. MOORE.

"I have gotten a box for 'Othello' to-night, and send the ticket for your friends the R——fes. I seriously recommend to you to recommend to them to go for half an hour, if only to see the third act — they will not easily have another opportunity. We — at least, I — cannot be there, so there will be no one in their way. Will you give or send it to them? it will come with a better grace from you than me.

"I am in no good plight, but will dine at ———'s with you, if I can. There is music and Covent-g.

"Will you go, at all events, to my box there afterward, to see a *début* of a young 16 [118] in the 'Child of Nature?'"

TO MR. MOORE.

"Sunday matin.

"Was not Iago perfection? particularly the last look. I was *close* to him (in the orchestra), and never saw an English countenance half so expressive.

"I am acquainted with no *im*material sensuality so delightful as good acting; and, as it is fitting there should be good plays, now and then, besides Shakespeare's, I wish you or Campbell would write one: the rest of 'us youth' have not heart enough.

"You were cut up in the *Champion* — is it not so? this day so am I — even to *shocking* the editor. The critic writes well; and as, at present, poesy is not my passion predominant, and my snake of Aaron has swallowed up all the other serpents, I don't feel fractious. I send you the paper, which I mean to take in for the future. We go to M.'s together. Perhaps I shall see you before, but don't let me *bore* you, now nor ever.

"Ever, as now, truly and affectionately," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 5, 1814.

"Do you go to the Lady Cahir's this even? If you do — and whenever we are bound to the same follies — let us embark in the same 'Shippe of

Fooles.' I have been up till five, and up at nine; and feel heavy with only winking for the last three or four nights.

"I lost my party and place at supper trying to keep out of the way of ———. I would have gone away altogether, but that would have appeared a worse affectation than t'other. You are of course engaged to dinner, or we may go quietly together to my box at Covent Garden, and afterward to this assemblage. Why did you go away so soon?

"Ever, etc.

"P. S. *Ought not* R——fe's supper to have been a dinner? Jackson is here, and I must fatigue myself into spirits."

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 18, 1814.

"Thanks — and punctuality. *What* has passed at ——s House? I suppose that *I* am to know, and '*pars fui*' of the conference. I regret that your ——s will detain you so late, but I suppose you will be at Lady Jersey's. I am going earlier with Hobhouse. You recollect that to-morrow we sup and see Kean.

"P. S. *Two* to-morrow is the hour of pugilism."

The supper, to which he here looks forward, took place at Watier's, of which club he had lately

become a member; and, as it may convey some idea of his irregular mode of diet, and thus account in part for the frequent derangement of his health, I shall here attempt, from recollection, a description of his supper on this occasion. We were to have been joined by Lord R——, who, however, did not arrive, and the party accordingly consisted but of ourselves. Having taken upon me to order the repast, and knowing that Lord Byron, for the last two days, had done nothing toward sustenance, beyond eating a few biscuits and (to appease appetite) chewing mastic, I desired that we should have a good supply of, at least, two kinds of fish. My companion, however, confined himself to lobsters, and of these finished two or three, to his own share, — interposing, sometimes, a small liqueur-glass of strong white brandy, sometimes a tumbler of very hot water, and then pure brandy again, to the amount of near half a dozen small glasses of the latter, without which, alternately with the hot water, he appeared to think the lobster could not be digested. After this, we had claret, of which having despatched two bottles between us, at about four o'clock in the morning we parted.

As Pope has thought his "delicious lobster-nights" worth commemorating, these particulars of one in which Lord Byron was concerned may also have some interest.

Among other nights of the same description which I had the happiness of passing with him, I

remember once, in returning home from some assembly at rather a late hour, we saw lights in the windows of his old haunt, Stevens's, in Bond Street, and agreed to stop there and sup. On entering, we found an old friend of his, Sir G—— W——, who joined our party, and the lobsters and brandy and water being put in requisition, it was (as usual on such occasions) broad daylight before we separated.

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 23, 1814.

"I must send you the Java government gazette of July 3, 1813, just sent to me by Murray. Only think of *our* (for it is you and I) setting paper warriors in array in the Indian seas. Does not this sound like fame — something almost like *posterity?* It is something to have scribblers squabbling about us, five thousand miles off, while we are agreeing so well at home. Bring it with you in your pocket; it will make you laugh, as it hath me.

"Ever yours,

"B.

"P. S. Oh, the anecdote! . . ."

To the circumstance mentioned in this letter he recurs more than once in the journals which he kept abroad; as thus, in a passage of his "Detached Thoughts," — where it will be perceived that, by a trifling lapse of memory, he represents

himself as having produced this gazette, for the first time, on our way to dinner.

"In the year 1814, as Moore and I were going to dine with Lord Grey in Portman Square, I pulled out a *Java Gazette* (which Murray had sent to me), in which there was a controversy on our respective merits as poets. It was amusing enough that we should be proceeding peaceably to the same table while they were squabbling about us in the Indian seas (to be sure the paper was dated six months before), and filling columns with Batavian criticism. But this is fame, I presume."

The following poem, written about this time, and, apparently, for the purpose of being recited at the Caledonian Meeting, I insert principally on account of the warm feeling which it breathes toward Scotland and her sons:

"Who hath not glowed above the page where Fame
Hath fixed high Caledon's unconquered name;
The mountain-land which spurned the Roman chain,
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
No foe could tame — no tyrant could command.

"That race is gone — but still their children breathe,
And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.

The blood which flowed with Wallace flows as free,
But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!
Oh! pass not by the Northern veteran's claim,
But give support — the world hath given him fame!

"The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
While cheerly following where the mighty led —
Who sleep beneath the undistinguished sod
Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
To us bequeath — 'tis all their fate allows —
The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse:
She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
The tearful eye in melancholy gaze,
Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose
The Highland seer's anticipated woes,
The bleeding phantom of each martial form
Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
While sad, she chants the solitary song,
The soft lament for him who tarries long —
For him, whose distant relics vainly crave
The coronach's wild requiem to the brave!

"'Tis Heaven — not man — must charm away the woe
Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly flow;
Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
Of half its bitterness for one so dear:
A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
A thornless pillow for the widowed head;
May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
And wean from penury the soldier's heir."

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 31, 1814.

"As I shall probably not see you here to-day, I write to request that, if not inconvenient to

yourself, you will stay in town till *Sunday;* if not to gratify me, yet to please a great many others, who will be very sorry to lose you. As for myself, I can only repeat that I wish you would either remain a long time with us, or not come at all; for these *snatches* of society make the subsequent separations bitterer than ever.

"I believe you think that I have not been quite fair with that Alpha and Omega of beauty, etc., with whom you would willingly have united me. But if you consider what her sister said on the subject, you will less wonder that my pride should have taken the alarm; particularly as nothing but the every-day flirtation of every-day people ever occurred between your heroine and myself. Had Lady ——— appeared to wish it — or even *not* to oppose it — I would have gone on, and very possibly married (that is, *if* the other had been equally accordant) with the same indifference which has frozen over the 'Black Sea' of almost all my passions. It is that very indifference which makes me so uncertain and apparently capricious. It is not eagerness of new pursuits, but that nothing impresses me sufficiently to *fix;* neither do I feel disgusted, but simply indifferent to almost all excitements. The proof of this is, that obstacles, the slightest even, *stop* me. This can hardly be *timidity*, for I have done some impudent things too, in my time; and in almost all cases, opposition is a stimulus. In mine, it is not; if

a straw were in my way, I could not stoop to pick it up.

"I have sent this long tirade, because I would not have you suppose that I have been *trifling* designedly with you or others. If you think so, in the name of St. Hubert (the patron of antlers and hunters) let me be married out of hand — I don't care to whom, so it amuses anybody else, and don't interfere with me much in the daytime.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"June 14, 1814.

"I *could* be very sentimental now, but I wont. The truth is, that I have been all my life trying to harden my heart, and have not yet quite succeeded — though there are great hopes — and you do not know how it sunk with your departure. What adds to my regret is having seen so little of you during your stay in this crowded desert, where one ought to be able to bear thirst like a camel, — the springs are so few, and most of them so muddy.

"The newspapers will tell you all that is to be told of emperors, etc.[119] They have dined, and supped, and shown their flat faces in all thoroughfares, and several saloons. Their uniforms are very becoming, but rather short in the skirts; and their conversation is a catechism, for which

and the answers I refer you to those who have heard it.

"I think of leaving town for Newstead soon. If so, I shall not be remote from your recess, and (unless Mrs. M. detains you at home over the caudle-cup and a new cradle) we will meet. You shall come to me, or I to you, as you like it; but *meet* we will. An invitation from Aston has reached me, but I do not think I shall go. I have also heard of ———. I should like to see her again, for I have not met her for years; and though 'the light that ne'er can shine again' is set, I do not know that 'one dear smile like those of old' might not make me for a moment forget the 'dulness' of 'life's stream.'

"I am going to R——'s to-night — to one of those suppers which '*ought* to be dinners.' I have hardly seen her, and never *him*, since you set out. I told you, you were the last link of that chain. As for ———, we have not syllabled one another's names since. The post will not permit me to continue my scrawl. More anon.

"Ever, dear Moore, etc.

"P. S. Keep the journal;[120] I care not what becomes of it; and if it has amused you I am glad that I kept it. 'Lara' is finished, and I am copying him for my third vol., now collecting; but *no separate* publication."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 14, 1814.

"I return your packet of this morning. Have you heard that Bertrand has returned to Paris with the account of Napoleon's having lost his senses? it is a *report;* but, if true, I must, like Mr. Fitzgerald and Jeremiah (of lamentable memory), lay claim to prophecy; that is to say, of saying that he *ought* to go out of his senses, in the penultimate stanza of a certain Ode, — the which, having been pronounced *nonsense* by several profound critics, has a still further pretension, by its unintelligibility, to inspiration.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. ROGERS.

"June 19, 1814.

"I am always obliged to trouble you with my awkwardnesses, and now I have a fresh one. Mr. W.[121] called on me several times, and I have missed the honour of making his acquaintance, which I regret, but which *you*, who know my desultory and uncertain habits, will not wonder at, and will, I am sure, attribute to anything but a wish to offend a person who has shown me much kindness, and possesses character and talents entitled to general respect. My mornings are late, and passed in fencing and boxing, and a variety of most unpoetical exercises, very wholesome, etc., but would be very

disagreeable to my friends, whom I am obliged to exclude during their operation. I never go out till the evening, and I have not been fortunate enough to meet Mr. W. at Lord Lansdowne's or Lord Jersey's, where I had hoped to pay him my respects.

"I would have written to him, but a few words from you will go further than all the apologetical sesquipedalities I could muster on the occasion. It is only to say that, without intending it, I contrive to behave very ill to everybody, and am very sorry for it. Ever, dear R.," etc.

The following undated notes to Mr. Rogers must have been written about the same time:

"Sunday.

"Your non-attendance at Corinne's is very *à propos*, as I was on the eve of sending you an excuse. I do not feel well enough to go there this evening, and have been obliged to despatch an apology. I believe I need not add one for not accepting Mr. Sheridan's invitation on Wednesday, which I fancy both you and I understood in the same sense: with him the saying of Mirabeau, that '*words* are *things*,' is not to be taken literally.

"Ever," etc.

"I will call for you at a quarter before *seven*, if that will suit you. I return you 'Sir Proteus,'[122] and shall merely add in return, as Johnson said of

and to, somebody or other, 'Are we alive after all this censure?' Believe me," etc.

"Tuesday.

"Sheridan was yesterday, at first, too sober to remember your invitation, but in the dregs of the third bottle he fished up his memory. The Staël out-talked Whitbread, was *ironed* by Sheridan, confounded Sir Humphry, and utterly perplexed your slave. The rest (great names in the red book, nevertheless) were mere segments of the circle. Ma'mselle danced a Russ saraband with great vigour, grace, and expression.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 21, 1814.

"I suppose 'Lara' is gone to the devil, — which is no great matter, only let me know, that I may be saved the trouble of copying the rest, and put the first part into the fire. I really have no anxiety about it, and shall not be sorry to be saved the copying, which goes on very slowly, and may prove to you that you may *speak out* — or I should be less sluggish. Yours," etc.

TO MR. ROGERS.

"June 27, 1814.

"You could not have made me a more acceptable present than Jacqueline, — she is all grace,

and softness, and poetry; there is so much of the last, that we do not feel the want of story, which is simple, yet *enough*. I wonder that you do not oftener unbend to more of the same kind. I have some sympathy with the *softer* affections, though very little in *my* way, and no one can depict them so truly and successfully as yourself. I have half a mind to pay you in kind, or rather *un*kind, for I have just 'supped full of horror' in two cantos of darkness and dismay.

"Do you go to Lord Essex's to-night? if so, will you let me call for you at your own hour? I dined with Holland-house yesterday at Lord Cowper's; my lady very gracious, which she can be more than any one when she likes. I was not sorry to see them again, for I can't forget that they have been very kind to me. Ever yours most truly,

"BN.

"P. S. Is there any chance or possibility of making it up with Lord Carlisle, as I feel disposed to do anything reasonable or unreasonable to effect it? I would before, but for the *Courier*, and the possible misconstructions at such a time. Perpend, pronounce."

On my return to London, for a short time, at the beginning of July, I found his poem of "Lara," which he had begun at the latter end of May, in the hands of the printer, and nearly ready for

publication. He had, before I left town, repeated to me, as we were on our way to some evening party, the first one hundred and twenty lines of the poem, which he had written the day before, — at the same time giving me a general sketch of the characters and the story.

His short notes to Mr. Murray, during the printing of this work, are of the same impatient and whimsical character as those of which I have already given specimens, in my account of his preceding publications: but, as matter of more interest now presses upon us, I shall forbear from transcribing them at length. In one of them he says, "I have just corrected some of the most horrible blunders that ever crept into a proof:" — in another, "I hope the next proof will be better; this was one which would have consoled Job, if it had been of his 'enemy's book:'" — a third contains only the following words: "Dear sir, you demanded more *battle* — there it is. Yours," etc.

The two letters that immediately follow were addressed to me, at this time, in town.

TO MR. MOORE.

"July 8, 1814.

"I returned to town last night, and had some hopes of seeing you to-day, and would have called, — but I have been (though in exceeding distempered good health) a little head-achy with free living, as it is called, and am now at the freezing

point of returning soberness. Of course, I should be sorry that our parallel lines did not deviate into intersection before you return to the country, — after that same nonsuit,[123] whereof the papers have told us, — but as you must be much occupied, I won't be affronted, should your time and business militate against our meeting.

"Rogers and I have almost coalesced into a joint invasion of the public. Whether it will take place or not, I do not yet know, and I am afraid 'Jacqueline' (which is very beautiful) will be in bad company.[124] But in this case, the lady will not be the sufferer.

"I am going to the sea, and then to Scotland; and I have been doing nothing, — that is, no good, — and am very truly," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"I suppose, by your non-appearance, that the phil*a*sophy of my note, and the previous silence of the writer, have put or kept you in *humeur*. Never mind — it is hardly worth while.

"This day have I received information from my man of law of the *non* — and never likely to be — performance of purchase by Mr. Claughton, of *im*pecuniary memory. He don't know what to do, or when to pay; and so all my hopes and worldly projects and prospects are gone to the devil. He (the purchaser, and the devil too, for aught I care) and I, and my legal advisers, are to meet to-mor-

row, the said purchaser having first taken special care to inquire 'whether I would meet him with temper?' — Certainly. The question is this — I shall either have the estate back, which is as good as ruin, or I shall go on with him dawdling, which is rather worse. I have brought my pigs to a Mussulman market. If I had but a wife now, and children, of whose paternity I entertained doubts, I should be happy, or rather fortunate, as Candide or Scarmentado. In the meantime, if you don't come and see me, I shall think that Sam.'s bank is broke too; and that you having assets there, are despairing of more than a piastre in the pound for your dividend.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 11, 1814.

"You shall have one of the pictures. I wish you to send the proof of 'Lara' to Mr. Moore, 33 Bury Street, *to-night*, as he leaves town to-morrow, and wishes to see it before he goes;[125] and I am also willing to have the benefit of his remarks.

"Yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 18, 1814.

"I think *you* will be satisfied even to *repletion* with our northern friends,[126] and I won't deprive you longer of what I think will give you pleasure;

for my own part, my modesty, or my vanity, must be silent.

"P. S. If you could spare it for an hour in the evening, I wish you to send it up to Mrs. Leigh, your neighbour, at the London Hotel, Albemarle Street."

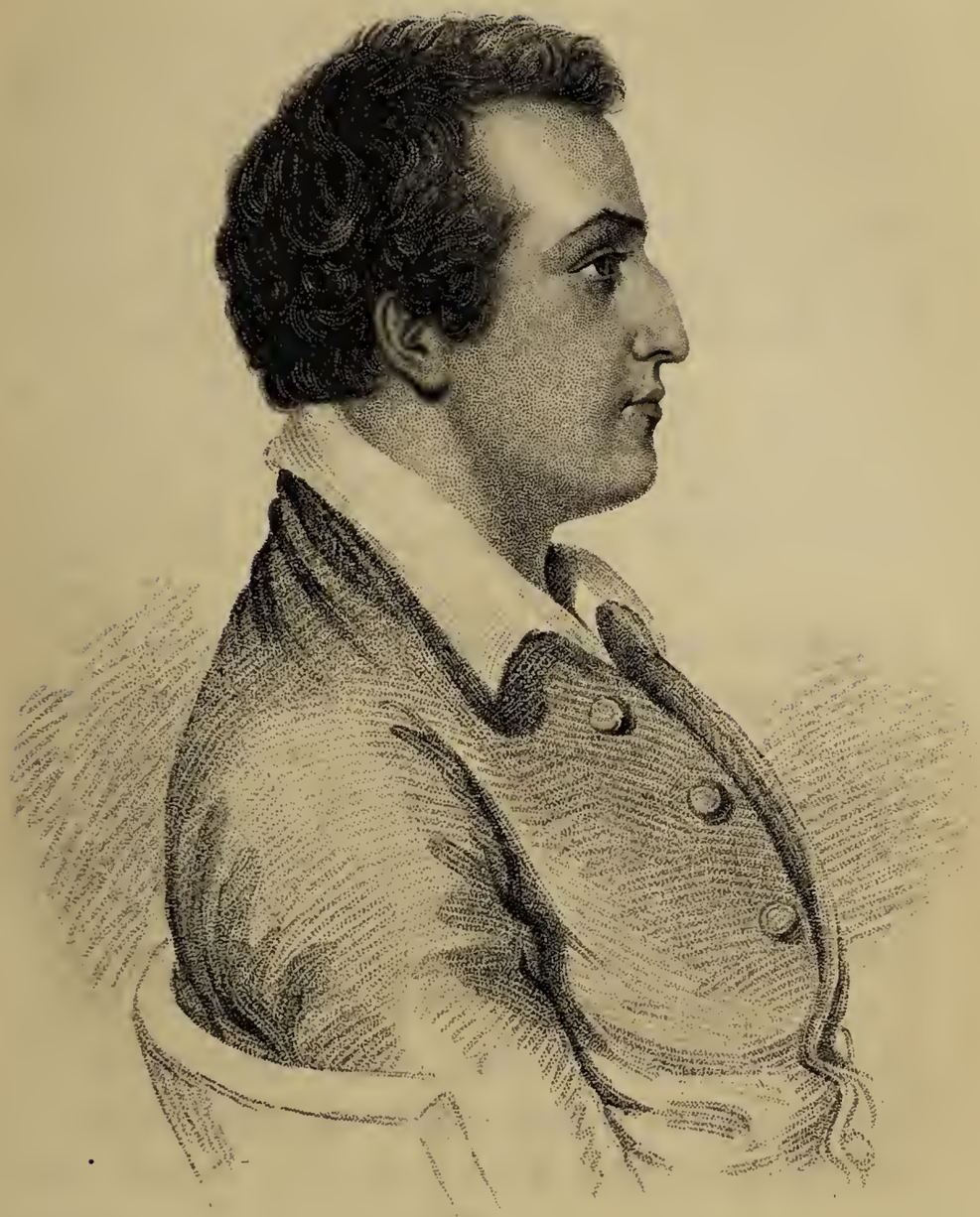
TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 23, 1814.

"I am sorry to say that the print [127] is by no means approved of by those who have seen it, who are pretty conversant with the original, as well as the picture from whence it is taken. I rather suspect that it is from the *copy* and not the *exhibited* portrait, and in this dilemma would recommend a suspension, if not an abandonment, of the *prefixion* to the volumes which you purpose inflicting upon the public.

"With regard to 'Lara,' don't be in any hurry. I have not yet made up my mind on the subject, nor know what to think or do till I hear from you; and Mr. Moore appeared to me in a similar state of indetermination. I do not know that it may not be better to *reserve* it for the *entire* publication you proposed, and not adventure in hardy singleness, or even backed by the fairy 'Jacqueline.' I have been seized with all kinds of doubts, etc., since I left London.

"Pray let me hear from you, and believe me," etc.



TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 24, 1814.

"The minority must, in this case, carry it, so pray let it be so, for I don't care sixpence for any of the opinions you mention, on such a subject: and P—— must be a dunce to agree with them. For my own part, I have no objection at all; but Mrs. Leigh and my cousin must be better judges of the likeness than others; and they hate it; and so I won't have it at all.

"Mr. Hobhouse is right as for his conclusion: but I deny the premises. The name only is Spanish;[128] the country is not Spain, but the Morea.

"'Waverley' is the best and most interesting novel I have redde since — I don't know when. I like it as much as I hate ———, and ———, and ———, and all the feminine trash of the last four months. Besides, it is all easy to me, I have been in Scotland so much (though then young enough too), and feel at home with the people, Lowland and Gael.

"A note will correct what Mr. Hobhouse thinks an error (about the feudal system in Spain); — it is *not* Spain. If he puts a few words of prose anywhere, it will set all right.

"I have been ordered to town to vote. I shall disobey. There is no good in so much prating, since 'certain issues strokes should arbitrate.'

If you have anything to say, let me hear from you. Yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 3, 1814.

"It is certainly a little extraordinary that you have not sent the *Edinburgh Review*, as I requested, and hoped it would not require a note a day to remind you. I see *advertisements* of 'Lara' and 'Jacqueline'; pray, *why?* when I requested you to postpone publication till my return to town.

"I have a most amusing epistle from the Ettrick bard — Hogg; in which, speaking of his bookseller, whom he denominates the 'shabbiest' of the *trade* for not 'lifting his bill,' he adds, in so many words, 'G——d d——n him and them both.' This is a pretty prelude to asking you to adopt him (the said Hogg); but this he wishes; and if you please, you and I will talk it over. He has a poem ready for the press (and your *bills* too, if '*lift*able'), and bestows some benedictions on Mr. Moore for his abduction of 'Lara' from the forthcoming Miscellany.[129]

"P. S. Sincerely, I think Mr. Hogg would suit you very well; and surely he is a man of great powers, and deserving of encouragement. I must knock out a Tale for him, and you should at all events consider before you reject his suit. Scott is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind; and Hogg says that, during the said gale, 'he is sure

that Scott is not quite at his ease, to say the best of it.' Ah! I wish these home-keeping bards could taste a Mediterranean white squall, or 'the Gut' in a gale of wind, or even the 'Bay of Biscay' with no wind at all."

TO MR. MOORE.

"HASTINGS, August 3, 1814.

"By the time this reaches your dwelling, I shall (God wot) be in town again probably. I have been here renewing my acquaintance with my old friend Ocean; and I find his bosom as pleasant a pillow for an hour in the morning as his daughters of Paphos could be in the twilight. I have been swimming and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs, — and listening to my friend Hodgson's raptures about a pretty wife-elect of his, — and walking on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the 'dolce far niente' for the last fortnight. I met a son of Lord Erskine's, who says he has been married a year, and is the 'happiest of men;' and I have met the aforesaid H., who is also the 'happiest of men;' so, it is worth while being here, if only to witness the superlative felicity of these foxes, who have cut off their tails, and would persuade the rest to part with their brushes to keep them in countenance.

"It rejoiceth me that you like 'Lara.' Jeffrey is out with his 45th Number, which I suppose you have got. He is only too kind to me, in my share

of it, and I begin to fancy myself a golden pheasant, upon the strength of the plumage wherewith he hath bedecked me. But then, 'surgi tamari,' etc., — the gentlemen of the *Champion*, and Perry, have got hold (I know not how) of the condolatory address to Lady J. on the picture-abduction by our R——, and have published them — with my name, too, smack — without even asking leave, or inquiring whether or no! D——n their impudence, and d——n everything. It has put me out of patience, and so, I shall say no more about it.

"You shall have 'Lara' and 'Jacque' (both with some additions) when out; but I am still demurring and delaying, and in a fuss, and so is R. in his way.

"Newstead is to be mine again. Claughton forfeits twenty-five thousand pounds; but that don't prevent me from being very prettily ruined. I mean to bury myself there — and let my beard grow — and hate you all.

"Oh! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettrick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to recommend him to Murray; and, speaking of his present bookseller, whose 'bills' are never 'lifted,' he adds, *totidem verbis*, 'God d——n him and them both.' I laughed, and so would you too, at the way in which this execration is introduced. The said Hogg is a strange being, but of great, though uncouth, powers. I think very highly of him, as a poet; but he, and half of

these Scotch and Lake troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies. London and the world is the only place to take the conceit out of a man — in the milling phrase. Scott, he says, is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind; during which wind, he affirms, the said Scott, 'he is sure, is not at his ease, — to say the best of it.' Lord, Lord, if these home-keeping minstrels had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterranean, and tasted a little open boating in a white squall — or a gale in 'the Gut' — or the 'Bay of Biscay,' with no gale at all — how it would enliven and introduce them to a few of the sensations! — to say nothing of an illicit amour or two upon shore, in the way of essay upon the Passions, beginning with simple adultery, and compounding it as they went along.

"I have forwarded your letter to Murray, — by the way, you had addressed it to *Miller*. Pray write to me, and say what art thou doing? 'Not finished!' Oons! how is this? these 'flaws and starts' must be 'authorised by your grandam,' and are unbecoming of any other author. I was sorry to hear of your discrepancy with the ——s, or rather your abjuration of agreement. I don't want to be impertinent, or buffoon on a serious subject, and am, therefore, at a loss what to say.

"I hope nothing will induce you to abate from the proper price of your poem, as long as there is a prospect of getting it. For my own part, I have

seriously and *not whiningly* (for that is not my way — at least it used not to be), neither hopes, nor prospects, and scarcely even wishes. I am, in some respects, happy, but not in a manner that can or ought to last, — but enough of that. The worst of it is, I feel quite enervated and indifferent. I really do not know, if Jupiter were to offer me my choice of the contents of his benevolent cask, what I would pick out of it. If I was born, as the nurses say, with a 'silver spoon in my mouth,' it has stuck in my throat, and spoiled my palate, so that nothing put into it is swallowed with much relish, — unless it be cayenne. However, I have grievances enough to occupy me that way too; but for fear of adding to yours by this pestilent long diatribe, I postpone the reading of them, *sine die*.

"Ever, dear M., yours, etc.

"P. S. Don't forget my godson. You could not have fixed on a fitter porter for his sins than me, being used to carry double without inconvenience."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 4, 1814.

"Not having received the slightest answer to my last three letters, nor the book (the last number of the *Edinburgh Review*) which they requested, I presume that you were the unfortunate person who

perished in the pagoda on Monday last, and address this rather to your executors than yourself, regretting that you should have had the ill luck to be the sole victim on that joyous occasion.

"I beg leave, then, to inform these gentlemen (whoever they may be) that I am a little surprised at the previous neglect of the deceased, and also at observing an advertisement of an approaching publication on Saturday next, against the which I protested, and do protest for the present.

"Yours (or theirs), etc., B."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 5, 1814.

"The *Edinburgh Review* is arrived — thanks. I enclose Mr. Hobhouse's letter, from which you will perceive the work you have made. However, I have done: you must send my rhymes to the devil your own way. It seems, also, that the 'faithful and spirited likeness' is another of your publications. I wish you joy of it; but it is no likeness — that is the point. Seriously, if I have delayed your journey to Scotland, I am sorry that you carried your complaisance so far; particularly as upon trifles you have a more summary method; witness the grammar of Hobhouse's 'bit of prose,' which has put him and me into a fever.

"Hogg must translate his own words: '*lifting*' is a quotation from his letter, together with 'God

d——n,' etc., which I suppose requires no translation.

"I was unaware of the contents of Mr. Moore's letter; I think your offer very handsome, but of that you and he must judge. If he can get more you won't wonder that he should accept it.

"Out with 'Lara,' since it must be. The tome looks pretty enough — on the outside. I shall be in town next week, and in the meantime wish you a pleasant journey.

"Yours," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"August 12, 1814.

"I was *not* alone, nor will be while I can help it. Newstead is not yet decided. Claughton is to make a grand effort by Saturday week to complete,— if not, he must give up twenty-five thousand pounds and the estate, with expenses, etc. If I resume the abbacy, you shall have due notice, and a cell set apart for your reception, with a pious welcome. Rogers I have not seen, but Larry and Jacky came out a few days ago. Of their effect I know nothing.

"There is something very amusing in *your* being an Edinburgh Reviewer. You know, I suppose, that T—— is none of the placidest, and may possibly enact some tragedy on being told that he is only a fool. If, now, Jeffrey were to be slain on account of an article of yours, there would be a fine conclusion. For my part, as Mrs. Winifred

Jenkins says, 'he has done the handsome thing by me,' particularly in his last number; so, he is the best of men and the ablest of critics, and I won't have him killed, — though I dare say many wish he were, for being so good-humoured.

"Before I left Hastings I got in a passion with an ink-bottle, which I flung out of the window one night with a vengeance; and what then? Why, next morning I was horrified by seeing that it had struck, and split upon, the petticoat of Euterpe's graven image in the garden, and grimed her as if it were on purpose.[130] Only think of my distress, — and the epigrams that might be engendered on the muse and her misadventure.

"I had an adventure almost as ridiculous, at some private theatricals near Cambridge — though of a different description — since I saw you last. I quarrelled with a man in the dark for asking me who I was (insolently enough, to be sure), and followed him into the greenroom (a *stable*) in a rage, amongst a set of people I never saw before. He turned out to be a low comedian, engaged to act with the amateurs, and to be a civil-spoken man enough, when he found out that nothing very pleasant was to be got by rudeness. But you would have been amused with the row, and the dialogue, and the dress — or rather the undress — of the party, where I had introduced myself in a devil of a hurry, and the astonishment that ensued. I had gone out of the theatre, for coolness, into

the garden; there I had tumbled over some dogs, and, coming away from them in very ill humour, encountered the man in a worse, which produced all this confusion.

"Well, and why don't you 'launch?' Now is your time. The people are tolerably tired with me, and not very much enamoured of ———, who has just spawned a quarto of metaphysical blank verse, which is nevertheless only a part of a poem.

"Murray talks of divorcing Larry and Jacky — a bad sign for the authors, who, I suppose, will be divorced too, and throw the blame upon one another. Seriously, I don't care a cigar about it, and I don't see why Sam should.

"Let me hear from and of you and my godson. If a daughter, the name will do quite as well.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"August 13, 1814.

"I wrote yesterday to Mayfield, and have just now enfranked your letter to mamma. My stay in town is so uncertain (not later than next week) that your packets for the north may not reach me; and as I know not exactly where I am going — however, *Newstead* is my most probable destination, and if you send your despatches before Tuesday, I can forward them to our new ally. But, after that day, you had better not trust to their arrival in time.

"——— has been exiled from Paris, *on dit*, for saying the Bourbons were old women. The Bourbons might have been content, I think, with returning the compliment.

"I told you all about Jacky and Larry yesterday; they are to be separated, — at least, so says the grand M., and I know no more of the matter. Jeffrey has done me more than 'justice;' but as to tragedy — um! — I have no time for fiction at present. A man cannot paint a storm with the vessel under bare poles on a lee shore. When I get to land, I will try what is to be done, and, if I flounder, there be plenty of mine elders and betters to console Melpomene.

"When at Newstead, you must come over, if only for a day — should Mrs. M. be *exigeante* of your presence. The place is worth seeing, as a ruin, and I can assure you there *was* some fun there, even in my time; but that is past. The ghosts,[131] however, and the gothics, and the waters, and the desolation, make it very lively still.

"Ever, dear Tom, yours," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, September 2, 1814.

"I am obliged by what you have sent, but would rather not see anything of the kind;[132] we have had enough of these things already, good and bad, and next month you need not trouble yourself to collect even the *higher* generation — on my account.

It gives me much pleasure to hear of Mr. Hobhouse's and Mr. Merivale's good entreatment by the journals you mention.

"I still think Mr. Hogg and yourself might make out an alliance. *Dodsley's* was, I believe, the last decent thing of the kind, and *his* had great success in its day, and lasted several years; but then he had the double advantage of editing and publishing. 'The Spleen,' and several of *Gray's* odes, much of *Shenstone*, and many others of good repute, made their first appearance in his collection. Now, with the support of Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, etc., I see little reason why you should not do as well; and, if once fairly established, you would have assistance from the youngsters, I dare say. Stratford Canning (whose 'Buonaparte' is excellent), and many others, and Moore, and Hobhouse, and I, would try a fall now and then (if permitted), and you might coax Campbell, too, into it. By the by, *he* has an unpublished (though printed) poem on a scene in Germany (Bavaria, I think), which I saw last year, that is perfectly magnificent, and equal to himself. I wonder he don't publish it.

"Oh! — do you recollect S——, the engraver's, mad letter about not engraving Phillips's picture of Lord *Foley?* (as he blundered it); well, I have traced it, I think. It seems, by the papers, a preacher of Johanna Southcote's is named *Foley;* and I can no way account for the said S——'s con-

fusion of words and ideas, but by that of his head's running on Johanna and her apostles. It was a mercy he did not say Lord *Tozer*. You know, of course, that S—— is a believer in this new (old) virgin of spiritual impregnation.

"I long to know what she will produce;[133] her being with child at sixty-five is indeed a miracle, but her getting any one to beget it, a greater.

"If you were not going to Paris or Scotland, I could send you some game: if you remain, let me know.

"P. S. A word or two of 'Lara,' which your enclosure brings before me. It is of no great promise separately; but, as connected with the other tales, it will do very well for the volumes you mean to publish. I would recommend this arrangement—'Childe Harold,' the smaller poems, 'Giaour,' 'Bride,' 'Corsair,' 'Lara;' the last completes the series, and its very likeness renders it necessary to the others. Cawthorn writes that they are publishing 'English Bards' in *Ireland:* pray inquire into this; because *it must* be stopped."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, September 7, 1814.

"I should think Mr. Hogg, for his own sake as well as yours, would be 'critical' as Iago himself in his editorial capacity; and that such a publica-

tion would answer his purpose, and yours too, with tolerable management. You should, however, have a good number to start with — I mean, *good* in quality; in these days, there can be little fear of not coming up to the mark in quantity. There must be many 'fine things' in Wordsworth; but I should think it difficult to make *six* quartos (the amount of the whole) all fine, particularly the pedler's portion of the poem; but there can be no doubt of his powers to do almost anything.

"I *am* 'very idle.' I have read the few books I had with me, and been forced to fish, for lack of argument. I have caught a great many perch and some carp, which is a comfort, as one would not lose one's labour willingly.

"Pray, who corrects the press of your volumes? I hope 'The Corsair' is printed from the copy I corrected, with the additional lines in the first canto, and some *notes* from Sismondi and Lavater, which I gave you to add thereto. The arrangement is very well.

"My cursed people have not sent my papers since Sunday, and I have lost Johanna's divorce from Jupiter. Who hath gotten her with prophet? Is it Sharpe, and how? . . . I should like to buy one of her seals: if salvation can be had at half a guinea a head, the landlord of the Crown and Anchor should be ashamed of himself for charging double for tickets to a mere terrestrial banquet. I am afraid, seriously, that these matters will lend a

sad handle to your profane scoffers, and give a loose to much damnable laughter.

"I have not seen Hunt's 'Sonnets' nor 'Descent of Liberty:' he has chosen a pretty place wherein to compose the last. Let me hear from you before you embark. Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"NEWSTEAD ABBEY, September 15, 1814.

"This is the fourth letter I have begun to you within the month. Whether I shall finish or not, or burn it like the rest, I know not. When we meet, I will explain *why* I have not written — *why* I have not asked you here, as I wished — with a great many other *whys* and wherefores, which will keep cold. In short, you must excuse all my seeming omissions and commissions, and grant me more *re*mission than St. Athanasius will to yourself, if you lop off a single shred of mystery from his pious puzzle. It is my creed (and it may be St. Athanasius's too) that your article on T—— will get somebody killed, and *that*, on the *Saints*, get him d——d afterward, which will be quite enow for one number. Oons, Tom! you must not meddle just now with the incomprehensible; for if Johanna Southcote turns out to be . . .

"Now for a little egotism. My affairs stand thus. To-morrow, I shall know whether a circumstance of importance enough to change many of

my plans will occur or not. If it does not, I am off for Italy next month, and London, in the meantime, next week. I have got back Newstead and twenty-five thousand pounds (out of twenty-eight paid already), — as a 'sacrifice,' the late purchaser calls it, and he may choose his own name. I have paid some of my debts, and contracted others; but I have a few thousand pounds, which I can't spend after my own heart in this climate, and so, I shall go back to the south. Hobhouse, I think and hope, will go with me; but, whether he will or not, I shall. I want to see Venice, and the Alps, and Parmesan cheeses, and look at the coast of Greece, or rather Epirus, from Italy, as I once did — or fancied I did — that of Italy, when off Corfu. All this, however, depends upon an event, which may, or may not, happen. Whether it will, I shall know probably to-morrow, and, if it does, I can't well go abroad at present.

"Pray pardon this parenthetical scrawl. You shall hear from me again soon; I don't call this an answer.

"Ever most affectionately," etc.

The "circumstance of importance," to which he alludes in this letter, was his second proposal for Miss Milbanke, of which he was now waiting the result. His own account, in his Memoranda, of the circumstances that led to this step is, in substance, as far as I can trust my recollection, as

follows. A person, who had for some time stood high in his affection and confidence, observing how cheerless and unsettled was the state both of his mind and prospects, advised him strenuously to marry; and, after much discussion, he consented. The next point for consideration was — who was to be the object of his choice; and while his friend mentioned one lady, he himself named Miss Milbanke. To this, however, his adviser strongly objected, — remarking to him that Miss Milbanke had at present no fortune, and that his embarrassed affairs would not allow him to marry without one; that she was, moreover, a learned lady, which would not at all suit him. In consequence of these representations, he agreed that his friend should write a proposal for him to the other lady named, which was accordingly done; and an answer, containing a refusal, arrived as they were, one morning, sitting together. "You see," said Lord Byron, "that, after all, Miss Milbanke is to be the person; I will write to her." He accordingly wrote on the moment, and, as soon as he had finished, his friend, remonstrating still strongly against his choice, took up the letter, but, on reading it over, observed, "Well, really, this is a very pretty letter; it is a pity it should not go. I never read a prettier one." "Then it *shall* go," said Lord Byron; and in so saying, sealed and sent off, on the instant, this fiat of his fate.

TO MR. MOORE.

"ND., September 15, 1814.

"I have written to you one letter to-night, but must send you this much more, as I have not franked my number, to say that I rejoice in my god-daughter and will send her a coral and bells, which I hope she will accept, the moment I get back to London.

"My head is at this moment in a state of confusion, from various causes, which I can neither describe nor explain — but let that pass. My employments have been very rural, — fishing, shooting, bathing, and boating. Books I have but few here, and those I have read ten times over, till sick of them. So, I have taken to breaking soda-water bottles with my pistols, and jumping into the water, and rowing over it, and firing at the fowls of the air. But why should I 'monster my nothings' to you, who are well employed, and happily too, I should hope? For my part, I am happy, too, in my way — but, as usual, have contrived to get into three or four perplexities, which I do not see my way through. But a few days, perhaps a day, will determine one of them.

"You do not say a word to me of your poem. I wish I could see or hear it. I neither could, nor would, do it or its author any harm. I believe I told you of Larry and Jacquy. A friend of mine was reading — at least a friend of his was reading

— said Larry and Jacquy in a Brighton coach. A passenger took up the book and queried as to the author. The proprietor said 'there were *two*' — to which the answer of the unknown was, 'Ay, ay — a joint concern, I suppose, *summot* like Sternhold and Hopkins.'

"Is not this excellent? I would not have missed the 'vile comparison' to have 'scaped being one of the 'Arcades ambo et cantare pares.' Good night. Again yours."

TO MR. MOORE.

"NEWSTEAD ABBEY, Sept. 20, 1814.

"Here's to her who long
Hath waked the poet's sigh!
The girl who gave to song
What gold could never buy.

"MY DEAR MOORE:—I am going to be married — that is, I am accepted,[134] and one usually hopes the rest will follow. My mother of the Gracchi (that *are* to be) *you* think too strait-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with 'golden opinions of all sorts of men,' and full of 'most blest conditions' as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father's invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity, — which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London and got a blue coat.

"She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really

know nothing certainly, and shall not inquire. But I do know, that she has talents and excellent qualities; and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me.

"Now, if you have anything to say against this, pray do; my mind's made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the meantime, I tell you (a *secret*, by the by, — at least, till I know she wishes it to be public) that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for one mayn't be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

"If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that — that — in short, I wish I was a better.

"Ever," etc.

TO THE COUNTESS OF ——.

"ALBANY, October 5, 1814.

"DEAR LADY ——: — Your recollection and invitation do me great honour; but I am going to be 'married and can't come.' My intended is two

hundred miles off, and the moment my business here is arranged, I must set out in a great hurry to be happy. Miss Milbanke is the good-natured person who has undertaken me, and, of course, I am very much in love, and as silly as all single gentlemen must be in that sentimental situation. I have been accepted these three weeks; but when the event will take place, I don't exactly know. It depends partly upon lawyers, who are never in a hurry. One can be sure of nothing; but, at present, there appears no other interruption to this intention, which seems as mutual as possible, and now no secret, though I did not tell first, — and all our relatives are congratulating away to right and left in the most fatiguing manner.

"You perhaps know the lady. She is niece to Lady Melbourne, and cousin to Lady Cowper and others of your acquaintance, and has no fault, except being a great deal too good for me, and that *I* must pardon, if nobody else should. It might have been *two* years ago, and, if it had, would have saved me a world of trouble. She has employed the interval in refusing about half a dozen of my particular friends (as she did me once, by the way), and has taken me at last, for which I am very much obliged to her. I wish it was well over, for I do hate bustle, and there is no marrying without some; and then, I must not marry in a black coat, they tell me, and I can't bear a blue one.

"Pray forgive me for scribbling all this non-

sense. You know I must be serious all the rest of my life, and this is a parting piece of buffoonery, which I write with tears in my eyes, expecting to be agitated. Believe me most seriously and sincerely your obliged servant,

"BYRON.

"P. S. My best rems. to Lord ——— on his return."

TO MR. MOORE.

"October 7, 1814.

"Notwithstanding the contradictory paragraph in the *Morning Chronicle*, which must have been sent by ———, or perhaps — I know not why I should suspect Claughton of such a thing, and yet I partly do, because it might interrupt his renewal of purchase, if so disposed; in short it matters not, but we are all in the road to matrimony — lawyers settling, relations congratulating, my intended as kind as heart could wish, and every one, whose opinion I value, very glad of it. All her relatives, and all mine too, seem equally pleased.

"Perry was very sorry, and has *re*-contradicted, as you will perceive by this day's paper. It was, to be sure, a devil of an assertion, since the first paragraph came from Sir Ralph's own county journal, and this in the teeth of it would appear to him and his as *my* denial. But I have written to do away that, enclosing Perry's letter, which was very polite and kind.

"Nobody hates bustle so much as I do; but there seems a fatality over every scene of my drama, always a row of some sort or other. No matter — Fortune is my best friend; and as I acknowledge my obligations to her, I hope she will treat me better than she treated the Athenian, who took some merit to *himself* on some occasion, but (after that) took no more towns. In fact, *she*, that exquisite goddess, has hitherto carried me through everything, and will, I hope, now; since I own it will be all *her* doing.

"Well, now, for thee. Your article on . . . is perfection itself. You must not leave off reviewing. By Jove, I believe you can do anything. There is wit, and taste, and learning, and good humour (though not a whit less severe for that), in every line of that critique.

"Next to *your* being an E. reviewer, *my* being of the same kidney, and Jeffrey's being such a friend to both, are amongst the events which I conceive were not calculated upon in Mr. — what's his name?'s — 'Essay on Probabilities.'

"But, Tom, I say — Oons! Scott menaces the 'Lord of the Isles.' Do you mean to compete? or lay by, till this wave has broke upon the *shelves?* (of booksellers, not rocks — a *broken* metaphor, by the way). You *ought* to be afraid of nobody; but your modesty is really as provoking and unnecessary as a ———'s. I am very merry, and have just been writing some elegiac stanzas on the death

of Sir P. Parker. He was my first cousin, but never met since boyhood. Our relations desired me, and I have scribbled and given it to Perry, who will chronicle it to-morrow. I am as sorry for him as one could be for one I never saw since I was a child; but should not have wept melodiously except 'at the request of friends.'

"I hope to get out of town and be married, but I shall take Newstead in my way; and you must meet me at Nottingham and accompany me to mine Abbey. I will tell you the day when I know it. Ever, etc.

"P. S. By the way, my wife elect is perfection, and I hear of nothing but her merits and her wonders, and that she is 'very pretty.' Her expectations, I am told, are great; but *what*, I have not asked. I have not seen her these ten months."

TO MR. MOORE.

"October 14, 1814.

"An' there were anything in marriage that would make a difference between my friends and me, particularly in your case, I would 'none on't.' My agent sets off for Durham next week, and I shall follow him, taking Newstead and you in my way. I certainly did not address Miss Milbanke with these views, but it is likely she may prove a considerable *parti*. All her father can give, or leave her, he will; and from her childless uncle, Lord

Wentworth, whose barony, it is supposed, will devolve on Ly. Milbanke (her sister), she has expectations. But these will depend upon his own disposition, which seems very partial toward her. She is an only child, and Sir R.'s estates, though dipped by electioneering, are considerable. Part of them are settled on her; but whether *that* will be *dowered* now, I do not know, — though, from what has been intimated to me, it probably will. The lawyers are to settle this among them, and I am getting my property into matrimonial array, and myself ready for the journey to Seaham, which I must make in a week or ten days.

"I certainly did not dream that she was attached to me, which it seems she has been for some time. I also thought her of a very cold disposition, in which I was also mistaken — it is a long story, and I won't trouble you with it. As to her virtues, etc., you will hear enough of them (for she is a kind of *pattern* in the north), without my running into a display on the subject. It is well that *one* of us is of such fame, since there is sad deficit in the *morale* of that article upon my part, — all owing to my 'bitch of a star,' as Captain Trenchemont says of his planet.

"Don't think you have not said enough of me in your article on T——; what more could or need be said?

"Your long-delayed and expected work — I suppose you will take fright at 'The Lord of the Isles'

and Scott now. You must do as you like, — I have said my say. You ought to fear comparison with none, and any one would stare, who heard you were so tremulous, — though, after all, I believe it is the surest sign of talent. Good morning. I hope we shall meet soon, but I will write again, and perhaps you will meet me at Nottingham. Pray say so.

"P. S. If this union is productive, you shall name the first fruits."

TO MR. HENRY DRURY.

"October 18, 1814.

"My dear Drury: — Many thanks for your hitherto unacknowledged 'Anecdotes.' Now for one of mine — I am going to be married, and have been engaged this month. It is a long story, and, therefore, I won't tell it, — an old and (though I did not know it till lately) a *mutual* attachment. The very sad life I have led since I was your pupil must partly account for the offs and *ons* in this now to be arranged business. We are only waiting for the lawyers and settlements, etc.; and next week, or the week after, I shall go down to Seaham in the new character of a regular suitor for a wife of mine own.

"I hope Hodgson is in a fair way on the same voyage — I saw him and his idol at Hastings. I wish he would be married at the same time, — I

should like to make a party, — like people electrified in a row, by (or rather through) the same chain, holding one another's hands, and all feeling the shock at once. I have not yet apprised him of this. He makes such a serious matter of all these things, and is so 'melancholy and gentlemanlike,' that it is quite overcoming to us choice spirits.

"They say one shouldn't be married in a black coat. I won't have a blue one, — that's flat. I hate it.

"Yours," etc.

TO MR. COWELL.

"October 22, 1814.

"My dear Cowell: — Many and sincere thanks for your kind letter — the bet, or rather forfeit, was one hundred to Hawke, and fifty to Hay (nothing to Kelly), for a guinea received from each of the two former.[135] I shall feel much obliged by your setting me right if I am incorrect in this statement in any way, and have reasons for wishing you to recollect as much as possible of what passed, and state it to Hodgson. My reason is this: some time ago Mr. ——— required a bet of me which I never made, and of course refused to pay, and have heard no more of it; to prevent similar mistakes is my object in wishing you to remember well what passed, and to put Hodgson in possession of your memory on the subject.

"I hope to see you soon in my way through Cambridge. Remember me to H., and believe me ever and truly," etc.

Soon after the date of this letter, Lord Byron had to pay a visit to Cambridge for the purpose of voting for Mr. Clarke, who had been started by Trinity College as one of the candidates for Sir Busick Harwood's professorship. On this occasion a circumstance occurred which could not but be gratifying to him. As he was delivering in his vote to the vice-chancellor, in the Senate House, the undergraduates in the gallery ventured to testify their admiration of him by a general murmur of applause and stamping of the feet. For this breach of order, the gallery was immediately cleared by order of the vice-chancellor.

At the beginning of the month of December, being called up to town by business, I had opportunities, from being a good deal in my noble friend's society, of observing the state of his mind and feelings, under the prospect of the important change he was now about to undergo; and it was with pain I found that those sanguine hopes[136] with which I had sometimes looked forward to the happy influence of marriage, in winning him over to the brighter and better side of life, were, by a view of all the circumstances of his present destiny, considerably diminished; while, at the same time, not a few doubts and misgivings, which had never

before so strongly occurred to me, with regard to his own fitness, under any circumstances, for the matrimonial tie, filled me altogether with a degree of foreboding anxiety as to his fate, which the unfortunate events that followed but too fully justified.

The truth is, I fear, that rarely, if ever, have men of the higher order of genius shown themselves fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life. "One misfortune" (says Pope) "of extraordinary geniuses is, that their very friends are more apt to admire than love them." To this remark there have, no doubt, been exceptions, — and I should pronounce Lord Byron, from my own experience, to be one of them, — but it would not be difficult, perhaps, to show, from the very nature and pursuits of genius, that such must generally be the lot of all preëminently gifted with it; and that the same qualities which enable them to command admiration are also those that too often incapacitate them from conciliating love.

The very habits, indeed, of abstraction and self-study to which the occupations of men of genius lead, are, in themselves, necessarily, of an unsocial and detaching tendency, and require a large portion of indulgence from others not to be set down as unamiable. One of the chief sources, too, of sympathy and society between ordinary mortals being their dependence on each other's intellectual

resources, the operation of this social principle must naturally be weakest in those whose own mental stores are most abundant and self-sufficing, and who, rich in such materials for thinking within themselves, are rendered so far independent of any aid from others. It was this solitary luxury (which Plato called "banqueting his own thoughts") that led Pope as well as Lord Byron, to prefer the silence and seclusion of his library to the most agreeable conversation. And not only, too, is the necessity of commerce with other minds less felt by such persons, but, from that fastidiousness which the opulence of their own resources generates, the society of those less gifted than themselves becomes often a restraint and burden, to which not all the charms of friendship, or even love, can reconcile them. "Nothing is so tiresome" (says the poet of Vaucluse, in assigning a reason for not living with some of his dearest friends) "as to converse with persons who have not the same information as one's self."

But it is the cultivation and exercise of the imaginative faculty that, more than anything, tends to wean the man of genius from actual life, and, by substituting the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart, to render, at last, the medium through which he feels no less unreal than that through which he thinks. Those images of ideal good and beauty that surround him in his musings soon accustom him to consider all that is

beneath this high standard unworthy of his care; till, at length, the heart becoming chilled as the fancy warms, it too often happens that, in proportion as he has refined and elevated his theory of all the social affections, he has unfitted himself for the practice of them.[137] Hence so frequently it arises that, in persons of this temperament, we see some bright but artificial idol of the brain usurp the place of all real and natural objects of tenderness. The poet Dante, a wanderer away from wife and children, passed the whole of a restless and detached life in nursing his immortal dream of Beatrice; while Petrarch, who would not suffer his only daughter to reside beneath his roof, expended thirty-two years of poetry and passion on an idealised love.

It is, indeed, in the very nature and essence of genius to be for ever occupied intensely with Self, as the great centre and source of its strength. Like the sister Rachel, in Dante, sitting all day before her mirror, —

> "mai non si smaga
> Del suo ammiraglio, e siede tutto giorno."

To this power of self-concentration, by which alone all the other powers of genius are made available, there is, of course, no such disturbing and fatal enemy as those sympathies and affections that draw the mind out actively toward others;[138] and, accordingly, it will be found that, among

those who have felt within themselves a call to immortality, the greater number have, by a sort of instinct, kept aloof from such ties, and, instead of the softer duties and rewards of being amiable, reserved themselves for the high, hazardous chances of being great. In looking back through the lives of the most illustrious poets, — the class of intellect in which the characteristic features of genius are, perhaps, most strongly marked, — we shall find that, with scarcely one exception, from Homer down to Lord Byron, they have been, in their several degrees, restless and solitary spirits, with minds wrapped up, like silkworms, in their own tasks, either strangers, or rebels to domestic ties, and bearing about with them a deposit for posterity in their souls, to the jealous watching and enriching of which almost all other thoughts and considerations have been sacrificed.

"To follow poetry as one ought" (says the authority [139] I have already quoted), "one must forget father and mother and cleave to it alone." In these few words is pointed out the sole path that leads genius to greatness. On such terms alone are the high places of fame to be won; nothing less than the sacrifice of the entire man can achieve them. However delightful, therefore, may be the spectacle of a man of genius tamed and domesticated in society, taking docilely upon him the yoke of the social ties, and enlightening without disturbing the sphere in which he moves, we

must, nevertheless, in the midst of our admiration, bear in mind that it is not thus smoothly or amiably immortality has been ever struggled for, or won. The poet thus circumstanced may be popular, may be loved; for the happiness of himself and those linked with him he is in the right road, — but not for greatness. The marks by which Fame has always separated her great martyrs from the rest of mankind are not upon him, and the crown cannot be his. He may dazzle, may captivate the circle, and even the times in which he lives, but he is not for hereafter.

To the general description here given of that high class of human intelligences to which he belonged, the character of Lord Byron was, in many respects, a signal exception. Born with strong affections and ardent passions, the world had, from first to last, too firm a hold on his sympathies to let imagination altogether usurp the place of reality, either in his feelings, or in the objects of them. His life, indeed, was one continued struggle between that instinct of genius, which was for ever drawing him back into the lonely laboratory of Self, and those impulses of passion, ambition, and vanity, which again hurried him off into the crowd, and entangled him in its interests; and though it may be granted that he would have been more purely and abstractedly the *poet*, had he been less thoroughly, in all his pursuits and propensities, the *man*, yet from this very mixture and alloy has it

arisen that his pages bear so deeply the stamp of real life, and that in the works of no poet, with the exception of Shakespeare, can every various mood of the mind — whether solemn or gay, whether inclined to the ludicrous or the sublime, whether seeking to divert itself with the follies of society or panting after the grandeur of solitary nature — find so readily a strain of sentiment in accordance with its every passing tone.

But while the naturally warm cast of his affections and temperament gave thus a substance and truth to his social feelings which those of too many of his fellow votaries of Genius have wanted, it was not to be expected that an imagination of such range and power should have been so early developed and unrestrainedly indulged without producing, at last, some of those effects upon the heart which have invariably been found attendant on such a predominance of this faculty. It must have been observed, indeed, that the period when his natural affections flourished most healthily was before he had yet arrived at the full consciousness of his genius, — before Imagination had yet accustomed him to those glowing pictures, after gazing upon which all else appeared cold and colourless. From the moment of this initiation into the wonders of his own mind, a distaste for the realities of life began to grow upon him. Not even that intense craving after affection, which nature had implanted in him,

could keep his ardour still alive in a pursuit whose results fell so short of his "imaginings;" and though, from time to time, the combined warmth of his fancy and temperament was able to call up a feeling which to his eyes wore the semblance of love, it may be questioned whether his heart had ever much share in such passions, or whether, after his first launch into the boundless sea of imagination, he could ever have been brought back and fixed by any lasting attachment. Actual objects there were, in but too great number, who, as long as the illusion continued, kindled up his thoughts and were the themes of his song. But they were, after all, little more than mere dreams of the hour; the qualities with which he invested them were almost all ideal, nor could have stood the test of a month's, or even week's, cohabitation. It was but the reflection of his own bright conceptions that he saw in each new object; and while persuading himself that they furnished the models of his heroines, he was, on the contrary, but fancying that he beheld his heroines in them.

There needs no stronger proof of the predominance of imagination in these attachments than his own serious avowal, in the journal already given, that often, when in the company of the woman he most loved, he found himself secretly wishing for the solitude of his own study. It was *there*, indeed, — in the silence and abstraction of that study, — that the chief scene of his mistress's empire and

glory lay. It was there that, unchecked by reality, and without any fear of the disenchantments of truth, he could view her through the medium of his own fervid fancy, enamour himself of an idol of his own creating, and out of a brief delirium of a few days or weeks send forth a dream of beauty and passion through all ages.

While such appears to have been the imaginative character of his loves (of all, except the one that lived unquenched through all), his friendships, though, of course, far less subject to the influence of fancy, could not fail to exhibit also some features characteristic of the peculiar mind in which they sprung. It was a usual saying of his own, and will be found repeated in some of his letters, that he had "no genius for friendship," and that whatever capacity he might once have possessed for that sentiment had vanished with his youth. If in saying thus he shaped his notions of friendship according to the romantic standard of his boyhood, the fact must be admitted; but as far as the assertion was meant to imply that he had become incapable of a warm, manly, and lasting friendship, such a charge against himself was unjust, and I am not the only living testimony of its injustice.

To a certain degree, however, even in his friendships, the effects of a too vivid imagination, in disqualifying the mind for the cold contact of reality, were visible. We are told that Petrarch (who, in

this respect, as in most others, may be regarded as a genuine representative of the poetic character), abstained purposely from a too frequent intercourse with his nearest friends, lest, from the sensitiveness he was so aware of in himself, there should occur anything that might chill his regard for them;[140] and though Lord Byron was of a nature too full of social and kindly impulses ever to think of such a precaution, it is a fact confirmatory, at least, of the principle on which his brother poet, Petrarch, acted, that the friends, whether of his youth or manhood, of whom he had seen least, through life, were those of whom he always thought and spoke with the most warmth and fondness. Being brought less often to the touchstone of familiar intercourse, they stood naturally a better chance of being adopted as the favourites of his imagination, and of sharing, in consequence, a portion of that bright colouring reserved for all that gave it interest and pleasure. Next to the dead, therefore, whose hold upon his fancy had been placed beyond all risk of severance, those friends whom he but saw occasionally, and by such favourable glimpses as only renewed the first kindly impression they had made, were the surest to live unchangingly, and without shadow, in his memory.

To this same cause there is little doubt, his love for his sister owed much of its devotedness and fervour. In a mind sensitive and versatile as his, long

habits of family intercourse might have estranged, or at least dulled, his natural affection for her; but their separation, during youth, left this feeling fresh and untried.[141] His very inexperience in such ties made the smile of a sister no less a novelty than a charm to him; and before the first gloss of this newly awakened sentiment had time to wear off, they were again separated, and for ever.

If the portrait which I have here attempted of the general character of those gifted with high genius be allowed to bear, in any of its features, a resemblance to the originals, it can no longer, I think, be matter of question whether a class so set apart from the track of ordinary life, so removed, by their very elevation, out of the influences of our common atmosphere, are at all likely to furnish tractable subjects for that most trying of all social experiments, matrimony. In reviewing the great names of philosophy and science, we shall find that all who have most distinguished themselves in those walks have, at least, virtually admitted their own unfitness for the marriage tie by remaining in celibacy, — Newton, Gassendi, Galileo, Descartes, Bayle, Locke, Leibnitz, Boyle, Hume, and a long list of other illustrious sages, having all led single lives.[142]

The poetic race, it is true, from the greater susceptibility of their imaginations, have more frequently fallen into the ever ready snare. But the fate of the poets in matrimony has but justified the

caution of the philosophers. While the latter have given warning to genius by keeping free of the yoke, the others have still more effectually done so by their misery under it, — the annals of this sensitive race having, at all times, abounded with proofs that genius ranks but low among the elements of social happiness; that, in general, the brighter the gift, the more disturbing its influence, and that in married life particularly, its effects have been too often like that of the "Wormwood Star," whose light filled the waters on which it fell with bitterness.

Besides the causes already enumerated as leading naturally to such a result, from the peculiarities by which, in most instances, these great labourers in the field of thought are characterised, there is also much, no doubt, to be attributed to an unluckiness in the choice of helpmates, — dictated, as that choice frequently must be, by an imagination accustomed to deceive itself. But from whatever causes it may have arisen, the coincidence is no less striking than saddening, that, on the list of married poets who have been unhappy in their homes, there should already be found four such illustrious names as Dante, Milton,[143] Shakespeare,[144] and Dryden; and that we should now have to add, as a partner in their destiny, a name worthy of being placed beside the greatest of them, — Lord Byron.

I have already mentioned my having been called up to town in the December of this year. The op-

portunities I had of seeing Lord Byron during my stay were frequent; and, among them, not the least memorable or agreeable were those evenings we passed together at the house of his banker, Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, where music — followed by its accustomed sequel of supper, brandy and water, and not a little laughter — kept us together, usually, till rather a late hour. Besides those songs of mine which he has himself somewhere recorded as his favourites, there was also one to a Portuguese air, "The song of war shall echo through our mountains," which seemed especially to please him, — the national character of the music, and the recurrence of the words "sunny mountains," bringing back freshly to his memory the impressions of all he had seen in Portugal. I have, indeed, known few persons more alive to the charms of simple music; and not unfrequently have seen the tears in his eyes while listening to the "Irish Melodies." Among those that thus affected him was one beginning "When first I met thee warm and young," the words of which, besides the obvious feeling which they express, were intended also to admit of a political application. He, however, discarded the latter sense wholly from his mind, and gave himself up to the more natural sentiment of the song with evident emotion.

On one or two of these evenings, his favourite actor, Mr. Kean, was of the party; and on another occasion, we had at dinner his early instructor in

pugilism, Mr. Jackson, in conversing with whom all his boyish tastes seemed to revive; and it was not a little amusing to observe how perfectly familiar with the annals of "The Ring,"[145] and with all the most recondite phraseology of "the Fancy," was the sublime poet of "Childe Harold."

The following note is the only one, of those I received from him at this time, worth transcribing:

"December 14, 1814.

"MY DEAREST TOM: — I will send the pattern to-morrow, and since you don't go to our friend ('of the *keeping* part of the town') this evening, I shall e'en sulk at home over a solitary potation. My self-opinion rises much by your eulogy of my social qualities. As my friend Scrope is pleased to say, I believe I am very well for a 'holiday drinker.' Where the devil are you? With Woolridge,[146] I conjecture — for which you deserve another abscess. Hoping that the American war will last for many years, and that all the prizes may be registered at Bermoothes, believe me, etc.

"P. S. I have just been composing an epistle to the archbishop for an especial license. Oons! it looks serious. Murray is impatient to see you, and would call, if you will give him audience. Your new coat! — I wonder you like the colour, and don't go about, like Dives, in purple."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 31, 1814.

"A thousand thanks for Gibbon; all the additions are very great improvements.

"At last I must be *most* peremptory with you about the *print* from Phillips's picture: it is pronounced on all hands the most stupid and disagreeable possible; so do, pray, have a new engraving, and let me see it first; there really must be no more from the same plate. I don't much care, myself; but every one I honour torments me to death about it, and abuses it to a degree beyond repeating. Now, don't answer with excuses; but, for my sake, have it destroyed: I never shall have peace till it is. I write in the greatest haste.

"P. S. I have written this most illegibly; but it is to beg you to destroy the print, and have another 'by particular desire.' It must be d——d bad, to be sure, since everybody says so but the original; and he don't know what to say. But do *do* it: that is, burn the plate, and employ a new *etcher* from the other picture. This is stupid and sulky."

On his arrival in town, he had, upon inquiring into the state of his affairs, found them in so utterly embarrassed a condition as to fill him with some alarm, and even to suggest to his mind the prudence

of deferring his marriage. The die, was, however, cast, and he had now no alternative but to proceed. Accordingly, at the end of December, accompanied by his friend Mr. Hobhouse, he set out for Seaham, the seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, the lady's father, in the county of Durham, and on the 2d of January, 1815, was married.

"I saw him stand
Before an altar with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood; — as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then —
As in that hour — a moment o'er his face,
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, — and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reeled around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been —
But the old mansion, and the accustomed hall,
And the remembered chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her, who was his destiny, came back,
And thrust themselves between him and the light: —
What business had they there at such a time?" [147]

This touching picture agrees so closely, in many of its circumstances, with his own prose account of

the wedding in his Memoranda, that I feel justified in introducing it, historically, here. In that memoir, he described himself as waking, on the morning of his marriage, with the most melancholy reflections, on seeing his wedding-suit spread out before him. In the same mood, he wandered about the grounds alone, till he was summoned for the ceremony, and joined, for the first time on that day, his bride and her family. He knelt down, he repeated the words after the clergyman; but a mist was before his eyes, — his thoughts were elsewhere; and he was but awakened by the congratulations of the bystanders, to find that he was — married.

The same morning, the wedded pair left Seaham for Halnaby, another seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, in the same county. When about to depart, Lord Byron said to the bride, "Miss Milbanke, are you ready?" — a mistake which the lady's confidential attendant pronounced to be a "bad omen."

It is right to add that I quote these slight details from memory, and am alone answerable for any inaccuracy there may be found in them.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"KIRKBY, January 6, 1815.

"*The* marriage took place on the 2d instant; so pray make haste and congratulate away.

"Thanks for the *Edinburgh Review* and the abolition of the print. Let the next be from the

other of Phillips — I mean (*not* the Albanian, but) the original one in the exhibition; the last was from the copy. I should wish my sister and Lady Byron to decide upon the next, as they found fault with the last. *I* have no opinion of my own upon the subject.

"Mr. Kinnaird will, I dare say, have the goodness to furnish copies of the 'Melodies,'[148] if you state my wish upon the subject. You may have them, if you think them worth inserting. The volumes in their collected state must be inscribed to Mr. Hobhouse, but I have not yet mustered the expressions of my inscription; but will supply them in time.

"With many thanks for your good wishes, which have all been realised, I remain, very truly, yours,

"BYRON."

TO MR. MOORE.

"HALNABY, DARLINGTON, January 10, 1815.

"I was married this day week. The parson has pronounced it — Perry has announced it — and the *Morning Post*, also, under the head of 'Lord Byron's Marriage,' — as if it were a fabrication, or the puff-direct of a new stay-maker.

"Now for thine affairs. I have redde thee upon the Fathers, and it is excellent well. Positively, you must not leave off reviewing. You shine in it — you kill in it; and this article has been taken

for Sydney Smith's (as I heard in town), which proves not only your proficiency in parsonology, but that you have all the airs of a veteran critic at your first onset. So, prithee, go on and prosper.

"Scott's 'Lord of the Isles' is out — 'the mail-coach copy' I have, by special license, of Murray.

"Now is *your* time; you will come upon them newly and freshly. It is impossible to read what you have lately done (verse or prose) without seeing that you have trained on tenfold. ——— has floundered; ——— has foundered. *I* have tried the rascals (*i. e.* the public) with my Harrys and Larrys, Pilgrims and Pirates. Nobody but S——y has done anything worth a slice of bookseller's pudding; and *he* has not luck enough to be found out in doing a good thing. Now, Tom, is thy time — 'Oh, joyful day! I would not take a knighthood for thy fortune.' Let me hear from you soon, and believe me ever, etc.

"P. S. Lady Byron is vastly well. How are Mrs. Moore and Joe Atkinson's 'Graces?' We must present our women to one another."

TO MR. MOORE.

"January 19, 1815.

"Egad! I don't think he is 'down;' and my prophecy — like most auguries, sacred and profane — is not annulled, but inverted.

"To your question about the 'dog'[149] — Umph! — my 'mother,' I won't say anything against — that is, about her; but how long a 'mistress' or friend may recollect paramours or competitors (lust and thirst being the two great and only bonds between the amatory or the amicable) I can't say, — or, rather, you know, as well as I could tell you. But as for canine recollections, as far as I could judge by a cur of mine own (always bating Boatswain, the dearest and, alas! the maddest of dogs), I had one (half a *wolf* by the she side) that doted on me at ten years old, and very nearly ate me at twenty. When I thought he was going to enact Argus, he bit away the backside of my breeches, and never would consent to any kind of recognition, in despite of all kinds of bones which I offered him. So, let Southey blush and Homer too, as far as I can decide upon quadruped memories.

"I humbly take it, the mother knows the son that pays her jointure — a mistress her mate, till he . . . and refuses salary — a friend his fellow, till he loses cash and character — and a dog his master, till he changes him.

"So, you want to know about milady and me? But let me not, as Roderick Random says, 'profane the chaste mysteries of Hymen'[150] — damn the word, I had nearly spelt it with a small *h*. I like Bell as well as you do (or did, you villain!) Bessy — and that is (or was) saying a great deal.

"Address your next to Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, where we are going on Saturday (a bore, by the way), to see father-in-law, Sir Jacob, and my lady's lady-mother. Write — and write more at length — both to the public and yours ever most affectionately, B."

TO MR. MOORE.

"SEAHAM, STOCKTON-ON-TEES,
"February 2, 1815.

"I have heard from London that you have left Chatsworth and all the women full of 'entusymusy'[151] about you, personally and poetically; and, in particular, that 'When first I met thee' has been quite overwhelming in its effect. I told you it was one of the best things you ever wrote, though that dog Power wanted you to omit part of it. They are all regretting your absence at Chatsworth, according to my informant — 'all the ladies quite,' etc. Stap my vitals!

"Well, now you have got home again — which I dare say is as agreeable as a 'draught of cool small beer to the scorched palate of a waking sot' — now you have got home again, I say, probably I shall hear from you. Since I wrote last, I have been transferred to my father-in-law's, with my lady and my lady's maid, etc., and the treacle-moon is over, and I am awake, and find myself married. My spouse and I agree to — and in — admiration. Swift says 'no *wise* man ever married;' but, for a fool, I think

it the most ambrosial of all possible future states. I still think one ought to marry upon *lease;* but am very sure I should renew mine at the expiration, though next term were for ninety and nine years.

"I wish you would respond, for I am here 'oblitusque meorum obliviscendus et illis.' Pray tell me what is going on in the way of intriguery, and how the w——s and rogues of the upper Beggar's Opera go on — or rather go off — in or after marriage; or who are going to break any particular commandment. Upon this dreary coast, we have nothing but county meetings and shipwrecks; and I have this day dined upon fish, which probably dined upon the crews of several colliers lost in the late gales. But I saw the sea once more in all the glories of surf and foam, — almost equal to the Bay of Biscay, and the interesting white squalls and short seas of Archipelago memory.

"My papa, Sir Ralpho, hath recently made a speech at a Durham tax-meeting; and not only at Durham, but here, several times since, after dinner. He is now, I believe, speaking it to himself (I left him in the middle) over various decanters, which can neither interrupt him nor fall asleep, — as might possibly have been the case with some of his audience. Ever thine, B.

"I must go to tea — damn tea. I wish it was Kinnaird's brandy, and with you to lecture me about it."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"SEAHAM, STOCKTON-UPON-TEES,
"February 2, 1815.

"You will oblige me very much by making an occasional inquiry at Albany, at my chambers, whether my books, etc., are kept in tolerable order, and how far my old woman [152] continues in health and industry as keeper of my old den. Your parcels have been duly received and perused; but I had hoped to receive 'Guy Mannering' before this time. I won't intrude further for the present on your avocations, professional or pleasurable, but am, as usual,

"Very truly," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"February 4, 1815.

"I enclose you half a letter from ———, which will explain itself — at least the latter part — the former refers to private business of mine own. If Jeffrey will take such an article, and you will undertake the revision, or, indeed, any portion of the article itself (for unless *you do*, by Phœbus, I will have nothing to do with it), we can cook up, between us three, as pretty a dish of sour-crout as ever tipped over the tongue of a bookmaker.

"You can, at any rate, try Jeffrey's inclination. Your late proposal from him made me hint this to ———, who is a much better proser and scholar

than I am, and a very superior man indeed. Excuse haste — answer this.

"Ever yours most, B.

"P. S. All is well at home. I wrote to you yesterday."

TO MR. MOORE.

"February 10, 1815.

"MY DEAR TOM: — Jeffrey has been so very kind about me and my damnable works, that I would not be indirect or equivocal with him, even for a friend. So, it may be as well to tell him that it is not mine; but that if I did not firmly and truly believe it to be much better than I could offer, I would never have troubled him or you about it. You can judge between you how far it is admissible, and reject it, if not of the right sort. For my own part, I have no interest in the article one way or the other, further than to oblige ———; and should the composition be a good one, it can hurt neither party, —nor, indeed, any one, saving and excepting Mr. ———.

"Curse catch me if I know what H—— means or meaned about the demonstrative pronoun,[153] but I admire your fear of being inoculated with the same. Have you never found out that you have a particular style of your own, which is as distinct from all other people as Hafiz of Shiraz from Hafiz of the *Morning Post?*

"So you allowed B—— and such like to hum and haw you, or, rather, Lady J——, out of her compliment, and *me* out of mine.[154] Sunburn me, but this was pitiful-hearted. However, I will tell her all about it when I see her.

"Bell desires me to say all kinds of civilities, and assure you of her recognition and high consideration. I will tell you of our movements south, which may be in about three weeks from this present writing. By the way, don't engage yourself in any travelling expedition, as I have a plan of travel into Italy which we will discuss. And then, think of the poesy wherewithal we should overflow, from Venice to Vesuvius, to say nothing of Greece, through all which — God willing — we might perambulate in one twelve months. If I take my wife, you can take yours; and if I leave mine, you may do the same. 'Mind you stand by me in either case, Brother Bruin.'

"And believe me inveterately yours,

"B."

MR. MOORE.

"February 22, 1815.

"Yesterday I sent off the packet and letter to Edinburgh. It consisted of forty-one pages, so that I have not added a line; but in my letter I mentioned what passed between you and me in autumn, as my inducement for presuming to trouble him

either with my own or ———'s lucubrations. I am anything but sure that it will do; but I have told J. that if there is any decent raw material in it, he may cut it into what shape he pleases, and warp it to his liking.

"So you *won't* go abroad, then, with *me*, — but alone. I fully purpose starting much about the time you mention, and alone, too.

"I hope J. won't think me very impudent in sending ——— only; there was not room for a syllable. I have avowed ——— as the author, and said that you thought or said, when I met you last, that he (J.) would not be angry at the coalition (though, alas! we have not coalesced), and so, if I have got into a scrape, I must get out of it — Heaven knows how.

"Your Anacreon [155] is come, and with it I sealed (its first impression) the packet and epistle to our patron.

"Curse the Melodies and the Tribes, to boot.[156] Braham is to assist — or hath assisted — but will do no more good than a second physician. I merely interfered to oblige a whim of K.'s and all I have got by it was 'a speech' and a receipt for stewed oysters.

"'Not meet' — pray don't say so. We must meet somewhere or somehow. Newstead is out of the question, being nearly sold again, or, if not, it is uninhabitable for my spouse. Pray write again. I will soon.

"P. S. Pray when do you come out? ever, or never? I hope I have made no blunder; but I certainly think you said to me (after W—th, whom I first pondered upon, was given up), that ——— and I might attempt . . . . *His* length alone prevented me from trying my part, though I should have been less severe upon the Reviewée.

"Your seal is the best and prettiest of my set, and I thank you very much therefor. I have just been — or rather, ought to be — very much shocked by the death of the Duke of Dorset. We were at school together, and there I was passionately attached to him. Since, we have never met — but once, I think, since 1805 — and it would be a paltry affectation to pretend that I had any feeling for him worth the name. But there was a time in my life when this event would have broken my heart; and all I can say for it now is that — it is not worth breaking.

"Adieu — it is all a farce."

MR. MOORE.

"March 2, 1815.

"My dear Thom: — Jeffrey has sent me the most friendly of all possible letters, and has accepted ———'s article. He says he has long liked not only, etc., but my 'character.' This must be *your* doing, you dog — ar'n't you ashamed of yourself, knowing me so well? This is what one gets for having you for a father confessor.

"I feel merry enough to send you a sad song.[157] You once asked me for some words which you would set. Now you may set or not, as you like, — but there they are, in a legible hand,[158] and not in mine, but of my own scribbling; so you may say of them what you please. Why don't you write to me? I shall make you 'a speech'[159] if you don't respond quickly.

"I am in such a state of sameness and stagnation, and so totally occupied in consuming the fruits — and sauntering — and playing dull games at cards — and yawning — and trying to read old Annual Registers and the daily papers — and gathering shells on the shore — and watching the growth of stunted gooseberry-bushes in the garden — that I have neither time nor sense to say more than yours ever, B.

"P. S. I open my letter again to put a question to you. What would Lady C——k, or any other fashionable Pidcock, give to collect you and Jeffrey and me to *one* party? I have been answering his letter, which suggested this dainty query. I can't help laughing at the thoughts of your face and mine; and our anxiety to keep the Aristarch in good humour during the *early* part of a compotation, till we got drunk enough to make him 'a speech.' I think the critic would have much the best of us — of one, at least — for I don't think diffidence (I mean social) is a disease of yours."

TO MR. MOORE.

"March 8, 1815.

"An event — the death of poor Dorset — and the recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have felt now, but could not — set me pondering, and finally into the train of thought which you have in your hands. I am very glad you like them, for I flatter myself they will pass as an imitation of your style. If I could imitate it well, I should have no great ambition of originality — I wish I could make you exclaim, with Dennis, 'That's my thunder, by G—d!' I wrote them with a view to your setting them, and as a present to Power, if he would accept the words, and *you* did not think yourself degraded, for once in a way, by marrying them to music.

"Sunburn N——! — why do you always twit me with his vile Ebrew nasalities? Have I not told you it was all K.'s doing, and my own exquisite facility of temper? But thou wilt be a wag, Thomas; and see what you get for it. Now for my revenge.

"Depend — and perpend — upon it that your opinion of ———'s poem will travel through one or other of the quintuple correspondents, till it reaches the ear, and the liver of the author.[160] Your adventure, however, is truly laughable — but how could you be such a potato? You 'a brother' (of the quill) too, 'near the throne,' to confide to

a man's *own publisher* (who has 'bought,' or rather sold, 'golden opinions' about him) such a damnatory parenthesis! 'Between you and me,' quotha — it reminds me of a passage in the 'Heir at Law' — 'Tête-à-tête with Lady Duberly, I suppose.' 'No — tête-à-tête with *five hundred people;*' and your confidential communication will doubtless be in circulation to that amount, in a short time, with several additions, and in several letters, all signed L. H. R. O. B., etc.

"We leave this place to-morrow, and shall stop on our way to town (in the interval of taking a house there) at Colonel Leigh's, near Newmarket, where any epistle of yours will find its welcome way.

"I have been very comfortable here, — listening to that d——d monologue, which elderly gentlemen call conversation, and in which my pious father-in-law repeats himself every evening — save one, when he played upon the fiddle. However, they have been very kind and hospitable, and I like them and the place vastly, and I hope they will live many happy months. Bell is in health, and unvaried good humour and behaviour. But we are all in the agonies of packing and parting; and I suppose by this time to-morrow I shall be stuck in the chariot with my chin upon a band-box. I have prepared, however, another carriage for the abigail, and all the trumpery which our wives drag along with them.

"Ever thine, most affectionately, B."

TO MR. MOORE.

"March 17, 1815.

"I meaned to write to you before on the subject of your loss;[161] but the recollection of the uselessness and worthlessness of any observations on such events prevented me. I shall only now add, that I rejoice to see you bear it so well, and that I trust time will enable Mrs. M. to sustain it better. Everything should be done to divert and occupy her with other thoughts and cares, and I am sure that all that can be done will.

"Now to your letter. Napoleon — but the papers will have told you all. I quite think with you upon the subject, and for my *real* thoughts this time last year, I would refer you to the last pages of the journal I gave you. I can forgive the rogue for utterly falsifying every line of mine ode — which I take to be the last and uttermost stretch of human magnanimity. Do you remember the story of a certain abbé, who wrote a treatise on the Swedish constitution, and proved it indissoluble and eternal? Just as he had corrected the last sheet, news came that Gustavus III. had destroyed this immortal government. 'Sir,' quoth the abbé, 'the King of Sweden may overthrow the *constitution*, but not *my book!*' I think *of* the abbé, but not *with* him.

"Making every allowance for talent and most consummate daring, there is, after all, a good deal

in luck or destiny. He might have been stopped by our frigates — or wrecked in the Gulf of Lyons, which is particularly tempestuous — or — a thousand things. But he is certainly Fortune's favourite, and —

"Once fairly set out on his party of pleasure,
Taking towns at his liking and crowns at his leisure,
From Elba to Lyons and Paris he goes,
Making *balls for* the ladies, and *bows* to his foes.

You must have seen the account of his driving into the middle of the royal army, and the immediate effect of his pretty speeches. And now if he don't drub the allies, there is 'no purchase in money.' If he can take France by himself, the devil's in't if he don't repulse the invaders, when backed by those celebrated sworders — those boys of the blade, the Imperial Guard, and the old and new army. It is impossible not to be dazzled and overwhelmed by his character and career. Nothing ever so disappointed me as his abdication, and nothing could have reconciled me to him but some such revival as his recent exploit; though no one could anticipate such a complete and brilliant renovation.

"To your question, I can only answer that there have been some symptoms which look a little gestatory. It is a subject upon which I am not particularly anxious, except that I think it would please her uncle, Lord Wentworth, and her father and mother. The former (Lord W.) is now in town,

and in very indifferent health. You, perhaps, know that his property, amounting to seven or eight thousand a year, will eventually devolve upon Bell. But the old gentleman has been so very kind to her and me, that I hardly know how to wish him in heaven, if he can be comfortable on earth. Her father is still in the country.

"We mean to metropolise to-morrow, and you will address your next to Piccadilly. We have got the Duchess of Devon's house there, she being in France.

"I don't care what Power says to secure the property of the Song, so that it is *not* complimentary to me, nor anything about 'condescending' or '*noble* author' — both 'vile phrases,' as Polonius says.

"Pray, let me hear from you, and when you mean to be in town. Your continental scheme is impracticable for the present. I have to thank you for a longer letter than usual, which I hope will induce you to tax my gratitude still further in the same way.

"You never told me about 'Longman' and 'next winter,' and I am *not* a 'mile-stone.'" [162].

TO MR. COLERIDGE.

"Piccadilly, March 31, 1815.

"Dear Sir: — It will give me great pleasure to comply with your request, though I hope there is still taste enough left amongst us to render it al-

most unnecessary, sordid and interested as, it must be admitted, many of 'the trade' are, where circumstances give them an advantage. I trust you do not permit yourself to be depressed by the temporary partiality of what is called 'the public' for the favourites of the moment; all experience is against the permanency of such impressions. You must have lived to see many of these pass away, and will survive many more — I mean personally, for *poetically*, I would not insult you by a comparison.

"If I may be permitted, I would suggest that there never was such an opening for tragedy. In Kean, there is an actor worthy of expressing the thoughts of the characters which you have every power of embodying; and I cannot but regret that the part of Ordonio was disposed of before his appearance at Drury Lane. We have had nothing to be mentioned in the same breath with 'Remorse' for very many years; and I should think that the reception of that play was sufficient to encourage the highest hopes of author and audience. It is to be hoped that you are proceeding in a career which could not but be successful. With my best respects to Mr. Bowles, I have the honour to be

"Your obliged and very obedient servant,

"Byron.

"P. S. You mention my 'Satire,' lampoon, or whatever you or others please to call it. I can only

say, that it was written when I was very young and very angry, and has been a thorn in my side ever since; more particularly as almost all the persons animadverted upon became subsequently my acquaintances, and some of them my friends, which is 'heaping fire upon an enemy's head,' and forgiving me too readily to permit me to forgive myself. The part applied to you is pert, and petulant, and shallow enough; but, although I have long done everything in my power to suppress the circulation of the whole thing, I shall always regret the wantonness or generality of many of its attempted attacks."

It was in the course of this spring that Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott became, for the first time, personally acquainted with each other. Mr. Murray, having been previously on a visit to the latter gentleman, had been entrusted by him with a superb Turkish dagger as a present to Lord Byron; and the noble poet, on their meeting this year in London, — the only time when these two great men had ever an opportunity of enjoying each other's society, — presented to Sir Walter, in return, a vase containing some human bones that had been dug up from under a part of the old walls of Athens. The reader, however, will be much better pleased to have these particulars in the words of Sir Walter Scott himself, who, with that good nature which renders him no less amiable than

he is admirable, has found time, in the midst of all his marvellous labours for the world, to favour me with the following interesting communication:[163]

"My first acquaintance with Byron began in a manner rather doubtful. I was so far from having anything to do with the offensive criticism in the *Edinburgh*, that I remember remonstrating against it with our friend, the editor, because I thought the 'Hours of Idleness' treated with undue severity. They were written, like all juvenile poetry, rather from the recollection of what had pleased the author in others than what had been suggested by his own imagination; but, nevertheless, I thought they contained some passages of noble promise. I was so much impressed with this, that I had thoughts of writing to the author; but some exaggerated reports concerning his peculiarities, and a natural unwillingness to intrude an opinion which was uncalled for, induced me to relinquish the idea.

"When Byron wrote his famous Satire, I had my share of flagellation among my betters. My crime was having written a poem ('Marmion,' I think) for a thousand pounds; which was no otherwise true than that I sold the copyright for that sum. Now, not to mention that an author can hardly be censured for accepting such a sum as the booksellers are willing to give him, especially as the gentlemen of the trade made no complaints of their bargain, I thought the interference with my private affairs was rather beyond the

limits of literary satire. On the other hand, Lord Byron paid me, in several passages, so much more praise than I deserved, that I must have been more irritable than I have ever felt upon such subjects, not to sit down contented, and think no more about the matter.

"I was very much struck, with all the rest of the world, at the vigour and force of imagination displayed in the first cantos of 'Childe Harold,' and the other splendid productions which Lord Byron flung from him to the public with a promptitude that savoured of profusion. My own popularity, as a poet, was then on the wane, and I was unaffectedly pleased to see an author of so much power and energy taking the field. Mr. John Murray happened to be in Scotland that season, and as I mentioned to him the pleasure I should have in making Lord Byron's acquaintance, he had the kindness to mention my wish to his lordship, which led to some correspondence.

"It was in the spring of 1815 that, chancing to be in London, I had the advantage of a personal introduction to Lord Byron. Report had prepared me to meet a man of peculiar habits and a quick temper, and I had some doubts whether we were likely to suit each other in society. I was most agreeably disappointed in this respect. I found Lord Byron in the highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met, for an hour or two, almost daily, in Mr. Murray's drawing-room, and found a

great deal to say to each other. We also met frequently in parties and evening society, so that for about two months I had the advantage of a considerable intimacy with this distinguished individual. Our sentiments agreed a good deal, except upon the subjects of religion and politics, upon neither of which I was inclined to believe that Lord Byron entertained very fixed opinions. I remember saying to him that I really thought that if he lived a few years he would alter his sentiments. He answered, rather sharply, 'I suppose you are one of those who prophesy I will turn Methodist.' I replied, 'No — I don't expect your conversion to be of such an ordinary kind. I would rather look to see you retreat upon the Catholic faith, and distinguish yourself by the austerity of your penances. The species of religion to which you must, or may, one day attach yourself must exercise a strong power on the imagination.' He smiled gravely, and seemed to allow I might be right.

"On politics, he used sometimes to express a high strain of what is now called Liberalism; but it appeared to me that the pleasure it afforded him as a vehicle of displaying his wit and satire against individuals in office was at the bottom of this habit of thinking, rather than any real conviction of the political principles on which he talked. He was certainly proud of his rank and ancient family, and, in that respect, as much an aristocrat as was

consistent with good sense and good breeding. Some disgusts, how adopted I know not, seemed to me to have given this peculiar and, as it appeared to me, contradictory cast of mind; but, at heart, I would have termed Byron a patrician on principle.

"Lord Byron's reading did not seem to me to have been very extensive either in poetry or history. Having the advantage of him in that respect, and possessing a good competent share of such reading as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under his eye objects which had for him the interest of novelty. I remember particularly repeating to him the fine poem of Hardyknute, an imitation of the old Scottish ballad, with which he was so much affected that some one who was in the same apartment asked me what I could possibly have been telling Byron by which he was so much agitated.

"I saw Byron, for the last time, in 1815, after I returned from France. He dined, or lunched, with me at Long's in Bond Street. I never saw him so full of gaiety and good humour, to which the presence of Mr. Mathews, the comedian, added not a little. Poor Terry was also present. After one of the gayest parties I ever was present at, my fellow traveller, Mr. Scott, of Gala, and I set off for Scotland, and I never saw Lord Byron again. Several letters passed between us — one perhaps every half year. Like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged gifts. I gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, which had been the

property of the redoubted Elfi Bey. But I was to play the part of Diomed, in the Iliad, for Byron sent me, some time after, a large sepulchral vase of silver. It was full of dead men's bones, and had inscriptions on two sides of the base. One ran thus: 'The bones contained in this urn were found in certain ancient sepulchres within the land walls of Athens, in the month of February, 1811.' The other face bears the lines of Juvenal:

"'Expende — quot libras in duce summo invenies.
— Mors sola fatetur quantula hominum corpuscula.'
— *Juv. x.*

"To these I have added a third inscription, in these words, 'The gift of Lord Byron to Walter Scott.'[164] There was a letter with this vase more valuable to me than the gift itself, from the kindness with which the donor expressed himself toward me. I left it naturally in the urn with the bones, — but it is now missing. As the theft was not of a nature to be practised by a mere domestic, I am compelled to suspect the inhospitality of some individual of higher station, — most gratuitously exercised certainly, since, after what I have here said, no one will probably choose to boast of possessing this literary curiosity.

"We had a good deal of laughing, I remember, on what the public might be supposed to think, or say, concerning the gloomy and ominous nature of our mutual gifts.

"I think I can add little more to my recollections of Byron. He was often melancholy, — almost gloomy. When I observed him in this humour, I used either to wait till it went off of its own accord, or till some natural and easy mode occurred of leading him into conversation, when the shadows almost always left his countenance, like the mist rising from a landscape. In conversation he was very animated.

"I met with him very frequently in society, our mutual acquaintances doing me the honour to think that he liked to meet with me. Some very agreeable parties I can recollect, — particularly one at Sir George Beaumont's, where the amiable landlord had assembled some persons distinguished for talent. Of these I need only mention the late Sir Humphry Davy, whose talents for literature were as remarkable as his empire over science. Mr. Richard Sharpe and Mr. Rogers were also present.

"I think I also remarked in Byron's temper starts of suspicion, when he seemed to pause and consider whether there had not been a secret, and perhaps offensive, meaning in something casually said to him. In this case, I also judged it best to let his mind, like a troubled spring, work itself clear, which it did in a minute or two. I was considerably older, you will recollect, than my noble friend, and had no reason to fear his misconstruing my sentiments toward him, nor had I ever the slightest reason to doubt that they were kindly re-

turned on his part. If I had occasion to be mortified by the display of genius which threw into the shade such pretensions as I was then supposed to possess, I might console myself that, in my own case, the materials of mental happiness had been mingled in a greater proportion.

"I rummage my brains in vain for what often rushes into my head unbidden, — little traits and sayings which recall his looks, manner, tone, and gestures; and I have always continued to think that a crisis of life was arrived in which a new career of fame was opened to him, and that, had he been permitted to start upon it, he would have obliterated the memory of such parts of his life as friends would wish to forget."

TO MR. MOORE.

"April 23, 1815.

"Lord Wentworth died last week. The bulk of his property (from seven to eight thousand per ann.) is entailed on Lady Milbanke and Lady Byron. The first is gone to take possession in Leicestershire, and attend the funeral, etc., this day.

"I have mentioned the facts of the settlement of Lord W.'s property, because the newspapers, with their usual accuracy, have been making all kinds of blunders in their statement. His will is just as expected — the principal part settled on Lady Milbanke (now Noel) and Bell, and a separate estate

left for sale to pay debts (which are not great) and legacies to his natural son and daughter.

"Mrs. ———'s tragedy was last night damned. They may bring it on again, and probably will; but damned it was, — not a word of the last act audible. I went (*malgré* that I ought to have stayed at home in sackcloth for unc., but I could not resist the *first* night of anything) to a private and quiet nook of my private box, and witnessed the whole process. The first three acts, with transient gushes of applause, oozed patiently but heavily on. I must say it was badly acted, particularly by ———, who was groaned upon in the third act, — something about 'horror — such a horror' was the cause. Well, the fourth act became as muddy and turbid as need be; but the fifth — what Garrick used to call (like a fool) the *concoction* of a play — the fifth act stuck fast at the king's prayer. You know he says, 'he never went to bed without saying them, and did not like to omit them now.' But he was no sooner upon his knees, than the audience got upon their legs — the damnable pit — and roared, and groaned, and hissed, and whistled. Well, that was choked a little; but the ruffian scene — the penitent peasantry — and killing the bishop and princes — oh, it was all over. The curtain fell upon unheard actors, and the announcement attempted by Kean for Monday was equally ineffectual. Mrs. Bartley was so frightened that, though the people were

tolerably quiet, the epilogue was quite inaudible to half the house. In short, — you know all. I clapped till my hands were skinless, and so did Sir James Mackintosh, who was with me in the box. All the world were in the house, from the Jerseys, Greys, etc., downwards. But it would not do. It is, after all, not an *acting* play; good language, but no power. . . . Women (saving Joanna Baillie) cannot write tragedy: they have not seen enough nor felt enough of life for it. I think Semiramis or Catherine II. might have written (could they have been unqueened) a rare play.

"It is, however, a good warning not to risk or write tragedies. I never had much bent that way; but if I had, this would have cured me.

"Ever, carissime Thom., thine

"B."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"May 21, 1815.

"You must have thought it very odd, not to say ungrateful, that I made no mention of the drawings,[165] etc., when I had the pleasure of seeing you this morning. The fact is, that till this moment I had not seen them, nor heard of their arrival: they were carried up into the library, where I have not been till just now, and no intimation given to me of their coming. The present is so very magnificent, that — in short, I leave Lady Byron to thank you for it herself, and merely send this to apologise

for a piece of apparent and unintentional neglect on my own part. Yours," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.[166]

"13 Piccadilly Terrace, June 12, 1815.

"I have nothing to offer in behalf of my late silence, except the most inveterate and ineffable laziness; but I am too supine to invent a lie, or I *certainly* should, being ashamed of the truth. K——, I hope, has appeased your magnanimous indignation at his blunders. I wished and wish you were in the Committee, with all my heart.[167] It seems so hopeless a business, that the company of a friend would be quite consoling, — but more of this when we meet. In the meantime, you are entreated to prevail upon Mrs. Esterre to engage herself. I believe she has been written to, but your influence, in person or proxy, would probably go further than our proposals. What they are, I know not; all *my* new function consists in listening to the despair of Cavendish Bradshaw, the hopes of Kinnaird, the wishes of Lord Essex, the complaints of Whitbread, and the calculations of Peter Moore, — all of which, and whom, seem totally at variance. C. Bradshaw wants to light the theatre with *gas*, which may, perhaps (if the vulgar be believed), poison half the audience, and all the *dramatis personæ*. Essex has endeavoured to persuade K—— not to get drunk, the consequence of which is, that he has never been sober

since. Kinnaird, with equal success, would have convinced Raymond that he, the said Raymond, had too much salary. Whitbread wants us to assess the pit another sixpence, — a d——d insidious proposition, — which will end in an O. P. combustion. To crown all, R——, the auctioneer, has the impudence to be displeased, because he has no dividend. The villain is a proprietor of shares, and a long-lunged orator in the meetings. I hear he has prophesied our incapacity, — 'a foregone conclusion,' whereof I hope to give him signal proofs before we are done.

"Will you give us an opera? No, I'll be sworn; but I wish you would.

"To go on with the poetical world, Walter Scott has gone back to Scotland. Murray, the bookseller, has been cruelly cudgelled of misbegotten knaves, 'in Kendal green,' at Newington Butts, in his way home from a purlieu dinner, — and robbed — would you believe it? — of three or four bonds of forty pound apiece, and a seal-ring of his grandfather's worth a million! This is his version, — but others opine that D'Israeli, with whom he dined, knocked him down with his last publication, 'The Quarrels of Authors,' in a dispute about copyright. Be that as it may, the newspapers have teemed with his 'injuria formæ,' and he has been embrocated, and invisible to all but the apothecary ever since.

"Lady B. is better than three months advanced in her progress toward maternity, and, we hope,

likely to go well through with it. We have been very little out this season, as I wish to keep her quiet in her present situation. Her father and mother have changed their names to Noel, in compliance with Lord Wentworth's will, and in complaisance to the property bequeathed by him.

"I hear that you have been gloriously received by the Irish, — and so you ought. But don't let them kill you with claret and kindness at the national dinner in your honour, which, I hear and hope, is in contemplation. If you will tell me the day, I'll get drunk myself on this side of the water, and waft you an applauding hiccup over the channel.

"Of politics, we have nothing but the yell for war; and C——h is preparing his head for the pike, on which we shall see it carried before he has done. The loan has made everybody sulky. I hear often from Paris, but in direct contradiction to the home statements of our hirelings. Of domestic doings, there has been nothing since Lady D——. Not a divorce stirring, — but a good many in embryo, in the shape of marriages.

"I enclose you an epistle received this morning from I know not whom; but I think it will amuse you. The writer must be a rare fellow.[168]

"P. S. A gentleman named D'Alton (not your Dalton) has sent me a National Poem called 'Dermid.' The same cause which prevented my writing to you operated against my wish to write

to him an epistle of thanks. If you see him, will you make all kinds of fine speeches for me, and tell him that I am the laziest and most ungrateful of mortals?

"A word more; don't let Sir John Stevenson (as an evidence on trials for copyright, etc.) talk about the price of your next poem, or they will come upon you for the *property tax* for it. I am serious, and have just heard a long story of the rascally tax-men making Scott pay for his. So, take care. Three hundred is a devil of a deduction out of three thousand."

TO MR. MOORE.

"July 7, 1815.

"'Grata superveniet,' etc. I had written to you again, but burnt the letter, because I began to think you seriously hurt at my indolence, and did not know how the buffoonery it contained might be taken. In the meantime, I have yours, and all is well.

"I had given over all hopes of yours. By the by, my 'grata superveniet' should be in the present tense; for I perceive it looks now as if it applied to this present scrawl reaching you, whereas it is to the receipt of thy Kilkenny epistle that I have tacked that venerable sentiment.

"Poor Whitbread died yesterday morning, — a sudden and severe loss. His health had been

wavering, but so fatal an attack was not apprehended. He dropped down, and I believe never spoke afterward. I perceive Perry attributes his death to Drury Lane, — a consolatory encouragement to the new Committee. I have no doubt that ———, who is of a plethoric habit, will be bled immediately; and as I have, since my marriage, lost much of my paleness, and — 'horresco referens' (for I hate even *moderate* fat) — that happy slenderness, to which, when I first knew you, I had attained, I by no means sit easy under this dispensation of the *Morning Chronicle*. Every one must regret the loss of Whitbread; he was surely a great and very good man.

"Paris is taken for the second time. I presume it, for the future, will have an anniversary capture. In the late battles, like all the world, I have lost a connection, — poor Frederick Howard, the best of his race. I had little intercourse, of late years, with his family, but I never saw or heard but good of him. Hobhouse's brother is killed. In short, the havoc has not left a family out of its tender mercies.

"Every hope of a republic is over, and we must go on under the old system. But I am sick at heart of politics and slaughters; and the luck which Providence is pleased to lavish on Lord Castlereagh is only a proof of the little value the gods set upon prosperity, when they permit such ———s as he and that drunken corporal,

old Blucher, to bully their betters. From this, however, Wellington should be excepted. He *is* a man — and the Scipio of our Hannibal. However, he may thank the Russian frosts, which destroyed the *real élite* of the French army, for the successes of Waterloo.

"La! Moore — how you blasphemes about 'Parnassus' and 'Moses!' I am ashamed for you. Won't you do anything for the drama? We beseech an opera. Kinnaird's blunder was partly mine. I wanted you of all things in the Committee, and so did he. But we are now glad you were wiser; for it is, I doubt, a bitter business.

"When shall we see you in England? Sir Ralph Noel (*late* Milbanke — he don't promise to be *late* Noel in a hurry), finding that one man can't inhabit two houses, has given his place in the north to me for a habitation; and there Lady B. threatens to be brought to bed in November. Sir R. and my Lady Mother are to quarter at Kirby — Lord Wentworth's that was. Perhaps you and Mrs. Moore will pay us a visit at Seaham in the course of the autumn. If so, you and I (*without* our *wives*) will take a *lark* to Edinburgh and embrace Jeffrey. It is not much above one hundred miles from us. But all this, and other high matters, we will discuss at meeting, which I hope will be on your return. We don't leave town till August.

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. SOTHEBY.

"Sept. 15, 1815. Piccadilly Terrace.

"DEAR SIR: — 'Ivan' is accepted, and will be put in progress on Kean's arrival.

"The theatrical gentlemen have a confident hope of its success. I know not that any alterations for the stage will be necessary; if any, they will be trifling, and you shall be duly apprised. I would suggest that you should not attend any except the latter rehearsals — the managers have requested me to state this to you. You can see them, viz. Dibdin and Rae, whenever you please, and I will do anything you wish to be done on your suggestion, in the meantime.

"Mrs. Mardyn is not yet out, and nothing can be determined till she has made her appearance — I mean as to her capacity for the part you mention, which I take it for granted is not in 'Ivan' — as I think 'Ivan' may be performed very well without her. But of that hereafter. Ever yours, very truly,

BYRON.

"P. S. You will be glad to hear that the season has begun uncommonly well — great and constant houses — the performers in much harmony with the Committee and one another, and as much good-humour as can be preserved in such complicated and extensive interests as the Drury Lane proprietary."

TO MR. SOTHEBY.

"September 25, 1815.

"DEAR SIR: — I think it would be advisable for you to see the acting managers when convenient, as there must be points on which you will want to confer; the objection I stated was merely on the part of the performers, and is *general* and not *particular* to this instance. I thought it as well to mention it at once — and some of the rehearsals you will doubtless see, notwithstanding.

"Rae, I rather think, has his eye on Naritzin for himself. He is a more popular performer than Bartley, and certainly the cast will be stronger with him in it; besides, he is one of the managers, and will feel doubly interested if he can act in both capacities. Mrs. Bartley will be Petrowna; as to the Empress, I know not what to say or think. The truth is, we are not amply furnished with tragic women; but make the best of those we have, — you can take your choice of them. We have all great hopes of the success — on which, setting aside other considerations, we are particularly anxious, as being the first tragedy to be brought out since the old Committee.

"By the way — I have a charge against you. As the great Mr. Dennis roared out on a similar occasion, 'By G—d, *that* is *my* thunder!' so do I exclaim, '*This* is *my* lightning!' I allude to a speech of Ivan's, in the speech with Petrowna and the

Empress, where the thought and almost expression are similar to Conrad's in the third canto of 'The Corsair.' I, however, do not say this to accuse you, but to exempt myself from suspicion,[169] as there is a priority of six months' publication, on my part, between the appearance of that composition and of your tragedies.

"George Lambe meant to have written to you. If you don't like to confer with the managers at present, I will attend to your wishes — so state them. Yours very truly, BYRON."

TO MR. TAYLOR.

"13 TERRACE, PICCADILLY, September 25, 1815.

"DEAR SIR: — I am sorry you should feel uneasy at what has by no means troubled me.[170] If your editor, his correspondents, and readers are amused, I have no objection to be the theme of all the ballads he can find room for — provided his lucubrations are confined to *me* only.

"It is a long time since things of this kind have ceased to 'fright me from my propriety;' nor do I know any similar attack which would induce me to turn again, — unless it involved those connected with me, whose qualities, I hope, are such as to exempt them in the eyes of those who bear no good-will to myself. In such a case, supposing it to occur, — to *reverse* the saying of Doctor Johnson, — 'what the law could not do for me, I would do for myself,' be the consequences what they might.

"I return you, with many thanks, Colman and the letters. The poems, I hope, you intended me to keep; at least, I shall do so, till I hear the contrary. Very truly yours."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Sept. 25, 1815.

"Will you publish the Drury Lane 'Magpie?' or, what is more, will you give fifty or even forty, pounds for the copyright of the said? I have undertaken to ask you this question on behalf of the translator, and wish you would. We can't get so much for him by ten pounds from anybody else, and I, knowing your magnificence, would be glad of an answer. Ever," etc.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"September 27, 1815.

"That's right and splendid, and becoming a publisher of high degree. Mr. Concanen (the translator) will be delighted, and pay his washerwoman; and, in reward for your bountiful behaviour in this instance, I won't ask you to publish any more for Drury Lane, or any lane whatever, again. You will have no tragedy or anything else from me, I assure you, and may think yourself lucky in having got rid of me, for good and all, without more damage. But I'll tell you what we will do for you,—act Sotheby's 'Ivan,' which will succeed; and then

your present and next impression of the dramas of that dramatic gentleman will be expedited to your heart's content; and if there is anything very good, you shall have the refusal; but you sha'n't have any more requests.

"Sotheby has got a thought, and almost the words, from the third canto of 'The Corsair,' which, you know, was published six months before his tragedy. It is from the storm in Conrad's cell. I have written to Mr. Sotheby to claim it; and, as Dennis roared out of the pit, 'By G—d, *that's my* thunder!' so do I, and will I, exclaim, 'By G—d that's *my lightning!*' that electrical fluid being, in fact, the subject of the said passage.

"You will have a print of Fanny Kelly, in the Maid, to prefix, which is honestly worth twice the money you have given for the MS. Pray what did you do with the note I gave you about Mungo Park?

"Ever," etc.

TO MR. MOORE.

"13 Terrace, Piccadilly, October 28, 1815.

"You are, it seems, in England again, as I am to hear from everybody but yourself; and I suppose you punctilious, because I did not answer your last Irish letter. When did you leave the 'swate country?' Never mind, I forgive you; a strong proof of — I know not what — to give the lie to —

"'He never pardons who hath done the wrong.'

You have written to ———. You have also written to Perry, who intimates hope of an opera from you. Coleridge has promised a tragedy. Now, if you keep Perry's word, and Coleridge keeps his own, Drury Lane will be set up; and, sooth to say, it is in grievous want of such a lift. We began at speed, and are blown already. When I say 'we,' I mean Kinnaird, who is the 'all in all sufficient,' and can count, which none of the rest of the Committee can.

"It is really very good fun, as far as the daily and nightly stir of these strutters and fretters go; and, if the concern could be brought to pay a shilling in the pound, would do much credit to the management. Mr. ——— has an accepted tragedy, . . . whose first scene is in his sleep (I don't mean the author's). It was forwarded to us as a prodigious favourite of Kean's; but the said Kean, upon interrogation, denies his eulogy, and protests against his part. How it will end, I know not.

"I say so much about the theatre, because there is nothing else alive in London at this season. All the world are out of it, except us, who remain to lie in, — in December, or perhaps earlier. Lady B. is very ponderous and prosperous, apparently, and I wish it well over.

"There is a play before me from a personage who signs himself 'Hibernicus.' The hero is Malachi, the Irishman and king; and the villain and usurper, Turgesius, the Dane. The conclusion is

fine. Turgesius is chained by the leg (*vide* stage direction) to a pillar on the stage; and King Malachi makes him a speech, not unlike Lord Castlereagh's about the balance of power and the lawfulness of legitimacy, which puts Turgesius into a frenzy — as Castlereagh's would, if his audience was chained by the leg. He draws a dagger and rushes at the orator; but, finding himself at the end of his tether, he sticks it into his own carcass, and dies, saying he has fulfilled a prophecy.

"Now, this is *serious downright matter of fact*, and the gravest part of a tragedy which is not intended for burlesque. I tell it you for the honour of Ireland. The writer hopes it will be represented; but what is Hope? nothing but the paint on the face of Existence; the least touch of Truth rubs it off, and then we see what a hollow-cheeked harlot we have got hold of. I am not sure that I have not said this last superfine reflection before. But never mind; it will do for the tragedy of Turgesius, to which I can append it.

"Well, but how dost thou do? thou bard not of a thousand but three thousand! I wish your friend, Sir John Piano-forte, had kept that to himself, and not made it public at the trial of the song-seller in Dublin. I tell you why: it is a liberal thing for Longman to do, and honourable for you to obtain; but it will set all the 'hungry and dinnerless, lank-jawed judges' upon the fortunate author. But they be d —— d! — the 'Jeffrey and

the Moore together are confident against the world in ink!' By the way, if poor C——e — who is a man of wonderful talent, and in distress,[171] and about to publish two volumes of poesy and biography, and who has been worse used by the critics than ever we were — will you, if he comes out, promise me to review him favourably in the E. R.? Praise him I think you must, but you will also praise him *well*, — of all things the most difficult. It will be the making of him.

"This must be a secret between you and me, as Jeffrey might not like such a project; nor, indeed, might C. himself like it. But I do think he only wants a pioneer and a sparkle or two to explode most gloriously. Ever yours most affectionately,

"B.

"P. S. This is a sad scribbler's letter; but the next shall be 'more of this world.'"

As, after this letter, there occur but few allusions to his connection with the Drury Lane management, I shall here avail myself of the opportunity to give some extracts from his "Detached Thoughts," containing recollections of his short acquaintance with the interior of the theatre.

"When I belonged to the Drury Lane Committee, and was one of the Sub-Committee of Management, the number of *plays* upon the shelves were about *five* hundred. Conceiving that amongst these

there must be *some* of merit, in person and by proxy I caused an investigation. I do not think that of those which I saw there was one which could be conscientiously tolerated. There never were such things as most of them! Mathurin was very kindly recommended to me by Walter Scott, to whom I had recourse, firstly, in the hope that he would do something for us himself; and, secondly, in my despair, that he would point out to us any young (or old) writer of promise. Mathurin sent his 'Bertram' and a letter *without* his address, so that at first I could give him no answer. When I at last hit upon his residence, I sent him a favourable answer and something more substantial. His play succeeded; but I was at that time absent from England.

"I tried Coleridge, too; but he had nothing feasible in hand at the time. Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered *all* his tragedies, and I pledged myself, and notwithstanding many squabbles with my Committed Brethren, did get 'Ivan' accepted, read, and the parts distributed. But, lo! in the very heart of the matter, upon some *tepid*ness on the part of Kean, or warmth on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play. Sir J. B. Burgess did also present four tragedies and a farce, and I moved greenroom and Sub-Committee, but they would not.

"Then the scenes I had to go through! — the authors, and the authoresses, and the milliners, and

the wild Irishmen, — the people from Brighton, from Blackwall, from Chatham, from Cheltenham, from Dublin, from Dundee, — who came in upon me! to all of whom it was proper to give a civil answer, and a hearing, and a reading. Mrs. ———'s father, an Irish dancing-master of sixty years, calling upon me to request to play Archer, dressed in silk stockings on a frosty morning to show his legs (which were certainly good and Irish for his age, and had been still better), — Miss Emma Somebody, with a play entitled 'The Bandit of Bohemia,' or some such title or production, — Mr. O'Higgins, then resident at Richmond, with an Irish tragedy, in which the unities could not fail to be observed, for the protagonist was chained by the leg to a pillar during the chief part of the performance. He was a wild man, of a savage appearance, and the difficulty of *not* laughing at him was only to be got over by reflecting upon the probable consequences of such cachinnation.

"As I am really a civil and polite person, and *do* hate giving pain when it can be avoided, I sent them up to Douglas Kinnaird, — who is a man of business, and sufficiently ready with a negative, — and left them to settle with him; and as the beginning of next year I went abroad, I have since been little aware of the progress of the theatres.

"Players are said to be an impracticable people. They are so; but I managed to steer clear of any disputes with them, and excepting one debate[172]

with the elder Byrne about Miss Smith's *pas de* (something — I forget the technicals), I do not remember any litigation of my own. I used to protect Miss Smith, because she was like Lady Jane Harley in the face, and likenesses go a great way with me. Indeed, in general, I left such things to my more bustling colleagues, who used to reprove me seriously for not being able to take such things in hand without buffooning with the histrions, or throwing things into confusion by treating light matters with levity.

"Then the Committee! — then the Sub-Committee! — we were but few, but never agreed. There was Peter Moore who contradicted Kinnaird, and Kinnaird who contradicted everybody; then our two managers, Rae and Dibdin; and our secretary, Ward! and yet we were all very zealous and in earnest to do good and so forth. ——— furnished us with prologues to our revived old English plays; but was not pleased with me for complimenting him as 'the Upton' of our theatre (Mr. Upton is or was the poet who writes the songs for Astley's), and almost gave up prologuing in consequence.

"In the pantomime of 1815–16 there was a representation of the masquerade of 1814 given by 'us youth' of Watier's Club to Wellington and Co. Douglas Kinnaird, and one or two others, with myself, put on masks, and went on the stage with the οἱ πολλοι, to see the effect of a theatre from the stage: it is very grand. Douglas danced

among the figuranti too, and they were puzzled to find out who we were, as being more than their number. It was odd enough that Douglas Kinnaird and I should have been both at the *real* masquerade, and afterward in the mimic one of the same, on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre."

Notes

Notes

1. Finding two different draughts of this letter among my papers, I cannot be quite certain as to some of the terms employed, but have little doubt that they are here given correctly.

2. In speaking thus, I beg to disclaim all affected modesty. Lord Byron had already made the same distinction himself in the opinions which he expressed of the living poets; and I cannot but be aware that, for the praises which he afterward bestowed on my writings, I was, in a great degree, indebted to his partiality to myself.

3. The Rev. Robert Bland, one of the authors of "Collections from the Greek Anthology." Lord Byron was, at this time, endeavouring to secure for Mr. Bland the task of translating Lucien Buonaparte's poem.

4. The brother of his late friend, Charles Skinner Matthews.

5. Lord Byron is here mistaken. Doctor Johnson never saw "Cecilia" till it was in print. A day or two before publication, the young authoress, as I understand, sent three copies to the three persons who had the best claim to them, — her father, Mrs. Thrale, and Doctor Johnson. — *Second edition.*

6. This poem is now printed in Lord Byron's Works.

7. On this occasion, another of the noble poet's peculiarities was, somewhat startlingly, introduced to my notice. When we were on the point of setting out from his lodgings in St. James's Street, it being then about midday, he said to the servant, who was shutting the door of the vis-à-vis, "Have you put in the pistols?" and was answered in the affirmative.

It was difficult, — more especially, taking into account the circumstances under which we had just become acquainted, — to keep from smiling at this singular noon-day precaution.

8. "Written beneath the picture of ———."

9. If there could be any doubt as to his intention of delineating himself in his hero, this adoption of the old Norman name of his family, which he seems to have at first contemplated, would be sufficient to remove it.

10. In the MS. the names "Robin" and "Rupert" had been successively inserted here and scratched out again.

11. Here the manuscript is illegible.

12. Among the acknowledged blemishes of Milton's great poem is his abrupt transition, in this manner, into an imitation of Ariosto's style, in the "Paradise of Fools."

13. To his sister, Mrs. Leigh, one of the first presentation copies was sent, with the following inscription in it:

"To Augusta, my dearest sister, and my best friend, who has ever loved me much better than I deserved, this volume is presented by her *father's* son, and most affectionate brother,

"B."

14. Little knew she, that seeming marble heart,
Now masked in silence, or withheld by pride,
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide.
— *Childe Harold*, Canto ii.

We have here another instance of his propensity to self-misrepresentation. However great might have been the irregularities of his college life, such phrases as the "art of the spoiler" and "spreading snares" were in nowise applicable to them.

15. After speaking to him of the sale, and settling the new edition, I said, "How can I possibly think of this rapid sale, and the profits likely to ensue, without recollecting — " "What?" "Think what sum your work may produce." "I shall be rejoiced, and wish it doubled and trebled; but do not talk to me of money. I never will receive money for my writings." — *Dallas's Recollections.*

16. In a letter to Pulteney, 12th May, 1735, Swift says: "I never got a farthing for anything I writ, except once."

17. He had taken a window opposite for the purpose, and was accompanied on the occasion by his old schoolfellows, Mr. Bailey and Mr. John Madocks. They went together from some assembly, and, on their arriving at the spot, about three o'clock in the morning, not finding the house that was to receive them open, Mr. Madocks undertook to rouse the inmates, while Lord Byron and Mr. Bailey sauntered, arm in arm, up the street. During this interval, rather a painful scene occurred. Seeing an unfortunate woman lying on the steps of a door, Lord Byron, with some expression of compassion, offered her a few shillings; but, instead of accepting them, she violently pushed away his hand, and, starting up with a yell of laughter, began to mimic the lameness of his gait. He did not utter a word; but "I could feel," said Mr. Bailey, "his arm trembling within mine, as we left her."

I may take this opportunity of mentioning another anecdote connected with his lameness. In coming out, one night, from a ball, with Mr. Rogers, as they were on their way to their carriage, one of the link-boys ran on before Lord Byron, crying, "This way, my lord." "He seems to know you," said Mr. Rogers. "Know me!" answered Lord Byron, with some degree of bitterness in his tone; "every one knows me, —I am deformed."

18. A review, somewhat too critical, of some of the guests is here omitted.

19. For the first day or two, at Middleton, he did not join his noble host's party till after dinner, but took his scanty repast of biscuits and soda-water in his own room. Being told by somebody that the gentleman above mentioned had pronounced such habits to be "effeminate," he resolved to show the "fox-hunter" that he could be, on occasion, as good a *bon-vivant* as himself, and, by his prowess at the claret next day, after dinner, drew forth from Mr. C—— the eulogium here recorded.

20. "Such are the names that here your plaudits sought,
When Garrick acted, and when Brinsley wrote."

At present the couplet stands thus:

"Dear are the days that made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write."

21. At present, "As glared the volumed blaze."

22. Some objection, it appears from this, had been made to the passage, "and Shakespeare *ceased to reign.*"

23. These added lines, as may be seen by reference to the printed address, were not retained.

24. "Early in the autumn of 1812," says Mr. Dallas, "he told me that he was urged by his man of business, and that Newstead *must* be sold." It was accordingly brought to the hammer at Garraway's, but not, at that time, sold, only £90,000 being offered for it. The private sale to which he alludes in this letter took place soon after, Mr. Claughton, the agent for Mr. Leigh, being the purchaser. It was never, however, for reasons which we shall see, completed.

25. A mode of signature he frequently adopted at this time.

26. A miniature by Sanders. Besides this miniature, Sanders had also painted a full length of his lordship. In reference to the latter picture, Lord Byron says, in a note to Mr. Rogers, "If you think the picture you saw at Murray's worth your acceptance, it is yours; and you may put a *glove* or mask on it, if you like."

27. Among the addresses sent in to the Drury Lane Committee was one by Doctor Busby, entitled a Monologue, of which the parody was enclosed in this letter. A short specimen of this trifle will be sufficient. The four first lines of the doctor's address are as follows:

"When energising objects men pursue,
What are the prodigies they cannot do?
A magic Edifice you here survey,
Shot from the ruins of the other day!"

Which verses are thus ridiculed, unnecessarily, in the parody:

"'When energising objects men pursue,'
The Lord knows what is writ by Lord knows who.

'A modest Monologue you here survey,'
Hissed from the theatre the 'other day.'"

28. "The Genuine Rejected Addresses, presented to the Committee of Management for Drury Lane Theatre, preceded by that written by Lord Byron and adopted by the Committee," — published by B. M'Millan.

29. In the ode entitled "The Parthenon," Minerva thus speaks:

"All who behold my mutilated pile
Shall brand its ravager with classic rage;
And soon a titled bard from Britain's isle
Thy country's praise and suffrage shall engage,
And fire with Athens' wrongs an angry age!"
— *Horace in London.*

30. 'Tis said that persons living on annuities
Are longer lived than others, — God knows why,
Unless to plague the grantors, — yet so true it is,
That some, I really think, *do* never die.
Of any creditors, the worst a Jew it is;
And *that's* their mode of furnishing supply:
In my young days they lent me cash that way,
Which I found very troublesome to pay.
— *Don Juan*, Canto ii.

31. Lady Charlotte Harley, to whom, under the name of Ianthe, the introductory lines to "Childe Harold" were afterward addressed.

32. The following are the lines in their present shape, and it will be seen that there is not a single alteration in which the music of the verse has not been improved as well as the thought:

"Fair clime! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There, mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek

Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the eastern wave:
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odours there!"

33. Mr. Jeffrey.

34. In Dallaway's "Constantinople," a book which Lord Byron is not unlikely to have consulted, I find a passage quoted from Gillies's History of Greece, which contains, perhaps, the first seed of the thought thus expanded into full perfection by genius: "The present state of Greece compared to the ancient is the silent obscurity of the grave contrasted with the vivid lustre of active life."

35. Among the recorded instances of such happy afterthoughts in poetry may be mentioned, as one of the most memorable, Denham's four lines, "Oh could I flow like thee," etc., which were added in the second edition of his poem.

36. "Letters on the Character and Poetical Genius of Lord Byron," by Sir Egerton Brydges, Bart.

37. "Continuus aspectus minus verendos magnos homines facit."

38. The only peculiarity that struck me on those occasions was the uneasy restlessness which he seemed to feel in wearing a hat, — an article of dress which, from his constant use of a carriage while in England, he was almost wholly unaccustomed to, and which, after that year, I do not remember to have ever seen upon him again. Abroad, he always wore a kind of foraging cap.

39. He here alludes to a dinner at Mr. Rogers's, of which I have elsewhere given the following account:

"The company consisted but of Mr. Rogers himself, Lord Byron, Mr. Sheridan, and the writer of this memoir. Sheridan knew the admiration his audience felt for him; the presence of the young poet, in particular, seemed to bring back his own youth and wit, and the details he gave of his early life were

not less interesting and animating to himself than delightful to us. It was in the course of this evening that, describing to us the poem which Mr. Whitbread had written, and sent in, among the other addresses for the opening of Drury Lane Theatre, and which, like the rest, turned chiefly on allusions to the Phœnix, he said: "But Whitbread made more of this bird than any of them; he entered into particulars, and described its wings, beak, tail, etc.; in short, it was a *poulterer's* description of a Phœnix." — *Life of Sheridan.*

40. His speech was on presenting a petition from Major Cartwright.

41. In an article on this Satire (written for *Cumberland's Review*, but never printed) by that most amiable man and excellent poet, the late Rev. William Crowe, the incongruity of these metaphors is thus noticed: "Within the space of three or four couplets, he transforms a man into as many different animals. Allow him but the compass of three lines, and he will metamorphose him from a wolf into a harpy, and in three more he will make him a blood-hound."

There are also in this MS. critique some curious instances of oversight or ignorance adduced from the Satire, such as "*Fish* from *Helicon*" — "*Attic* flowers *Aonian* odours breathe," etc.

42. The remainder of this letter, it appears, has been lost.

43. He calls the letter of Mr. Croker "unexpected" because, in their previous correspondence and interviews on the subject, that gentleman had not been able to hold out so early a prospect of a passage, nor one which was likely to be so agreeable in point of society.

44. This is written on a separate slip of paper enclosed.

45. The passage referred to by the reviewers is in the poem entitled "Resentment," and the following is, I take for granted, the part which Lord Byron is accused by them of having imitated:

> "Those are like wax — apply them to the fire,
> Melting, they take th' impressions you desire;
> Easy to mould, and fashion as you please,
> And again moulded with an equal ease:

Like smelted iron these the forms retain;
But, once impressed, will never melt again."

46. One of his travelling projects appears to have been a visit to Abyssinia; at least, I have found, among his papers, a letter founded on that supposition, in which the writer entreats of him to procure information concerning "a kingdom of Jews mentioned by Bruce as residing on the mountain of Samen in that country. I have had the honour," he adds, "of some correspondence with the Rev. Doctor Buchanan and the reverend and learned G. S. Faber, on the subject of the existence of this kingdom of Jews, which, if it prove to be a fact, will more clearly elucidate many of the Scripture prophecies; . . . and, if Providence favours your lordship's mission to Abyssinia, an intercourse might be established between England and that country, and the English ships, according to the Rev. Mr. Faber, might be the principal means of transporting the kingdom of Jews, now in Abyssinia, to Egypt, in the way to their own country, Palestine."

47. "A Persian's Heav'n is easily made —
'Tis but black eyes and lemonade."

48. The Ode of Horace,

"Natis in usum lætitiæ," etc.;

some passages of which I told him might be parodied, in allusion to some of his late adventures:

"Quanta laboras in Charybdi!
Digne puer meliore flammâ!"

49. In his first edition of "The Giaour," he had used this word as a trisyllable, — "Bright as the gem of Giamschid," — but on my remarking to him, upon the authority of Richardson's Persian Dictionary, that this was incorrect, he altered it to "Bright as the ruby of Giamschid." On seeing this, however, I wrote to him, "that, as the comparison of his heroine's eye to a 'ruby' might unluckily call up the idea of its being

blood-shot, he had better change the line to "Bright as the jewel of Giamschid," which he accordingly did in the following edition.

50. Having already endeavoured to obviate the charge of vanity, to which I am aware I expose myself by being thus accessory to the publication of eulogies, so warm and so little merited, on myself, I shall here only add that it will abundantly console me under such a charge, if, in whatever degree the judgment of my noble friend may be called in question for these praises, he shall, in the same proportion, receive credit for the good-nature and warm-heartedness by which they were dictated.

51. I had already, singularly enough, anticipated this suggestion by making the daughter of a Peri the heroine of one of my stories, and detailing the love adventures of her aërial parent in an episode. In acquainting Lord Byron with this circumstance, in my answer to the above letter, I added: "All I ask of your friendship is, — not that you will abstain from Peris on my account, for that is too much to ask of human (or, at least, author's) nature — but that, whenever you mean to pay your addresses to any of these aërial ladies, you will, at once, tell me so, frankly and instantly, and let me, at least, have my choice whether I shall be desperate enough to go on, with such a rival, or at once surrender the whole race into your hands, and take, for the future, to antediluvians with Mr. Montgomery."

52. The letter of Lord Sligo, already given.

53. Now printed in his Works.

54. The motto to "The Giaour," which is taken from one of the "Irish Melodies," had been quoted by him incorrectly in the first editions of the poem. He made afterward a similar mistake in the lines from Burns prefixed to the "Bride of Abydos."

55. "The Bride of Abydos."

56. Among the stories intended to be introduced into "Lalla Rookh," which I had begun, but, from various causes, never finished, there was one which I had made some progress in, at the time of the appearance of "The Bride," and which, on reading that poem, I found to contain such singular coin-

cidences with it, not only in locality and costume, but in plot and characters, that I immediately gave up my story altogether, and began another on an entirely new subject, the Fire-worshippers. To this circumstance, which I immediately communicated to him, Lord Byron alludes in this letter. In my hero (to whom I had even given the name of "Zelim," and who was a descendant of Ali, outlawed, with all his followers, by the reigning caliph), it was my intention to shadow out, as I did afterward in another form, the national cause of Ireland. To quote the words of my letter to Lord Byron on the subject: "I chose this story because one writes best about what one feels most, and I thought the parallel with Ireland would enable me to infuse some vigour into my hero's character. But to aim at vigour and strong feeling after *you* is hopeless; that region 'was made for Cæsar.'"

57. C'est surtout aux hommes qui sont hors de toute comparaison par le génie qu'on aime à ressembler au moins par les foiblesses. — *Ginguene.*

58. Earth holds no other like to thee,
Or, if it doth, in vain for me:
For worlds I dare not view the dame
Resembling thee, yet not the same.
— *The Giaour.*

59. Evidently Mr. Hodgson.

60. He had this year so far departed from his strict plan of diet as to eat fish occasionally.

61. We have here another instance, in addition to the munificent aid afforded to Mr. Hodgson, of the generous readiness of the poet, notwithstanding his own limited means, to make the resources he possessed available for the assistance of his friends.

62. Left blank thus in the original.

63. It was thus that he, in general, spelled this word.

64. The present Lord Dudley.

65. This passage has been already extracted.

66. His cousin, the present Lord Byron.

67. Miss Milbanke, afterward Lady Byron.

68. Two or three words are here scratched out in the manuscript, but the import of the sentence evidently is that Mr.

Hodgson (to whom the passage refers) had been revealing to some friends the secret of Lord Byron's kindness to him.

69. This passage of the journal has already appeared in my "Life of Sheridan."

70. These names are all left blank in the original.

71. Of this strange, wild poem, which extends to about two hundred and fifty lines, the only copy that Lord Byron, I believe, ever wrote, he presented to Lord Holland. Though with a good deal of vigour and imagination, it is, for the most part, rather clumsily executed, wanting the point and condensation of those clever verses of Mr. Coleridge,[1] which Lord Byron, adopting a notion long prevalent, has attributed to Professor Porson. There are, however, some of the stanzas of "The Devil's Drive" well worth preserving.

1.

"The Devil returned to hell by two,
And he stayed at home till five;
When he dined on some homicides done in *ragoût*,
And a rebel or so in an *Irish* stew,
And sausages made of a self-slain Jew,
And bethought himself what next to do,
'And,' quoth he, 'I'll take a drive.
I walked in the morning, I'll ride to-night;
In darkness my children take most delight,
And I'll see how my favourites thrive.

2.

"'And what shall I ride in?' quoth Lucifer, then—
'If I followed my taste, indeed,
I should mount in a wagon of wounded men,
And smile to see them bleed.
But these will be furnished again and again,
And at present my purpose is speed;
To see my manor as much as I may,
And watch that no souls shall be poached away.

[1] Or Mr. Southey, for the right of authorship in them seems still undecided.

3.

"'I have a state coach at Carleton House,
A chariot in Seymour Place;
But they're lent to two friends, who make me amends
By driving my favourite pace:
And they handle their reins with such a grace,
I have something for both at the end of the race.

4.

"'So now for the earth to take my chance.'
Then up to the earth sprung he;
And making a jump from Moscow to France,
He stepped across the sea,
And rested his hoof on a turnpike road,
No very great way from a bishop's abode.

5.

"But first as he flew, I forgot to say,
That he hovered a moment upon his way
To look upon Leipsic plain;
And so sweet to his eye was its sulphury glare,
And so soft to his ear was the cry of despair,
That he perched on a mountain of slain;
And he gazed with delight from its growing height;
Not often on earth had he seen such a sight,
Nor his work done half as well:
For the field ran so red with the blood of the dead,
That it blushed like the waves of hell!
Then loudly, and wildly, and long laughed he—
'Methinks they have here little need of *me!*' . . .

8.

"But the softest note that soothed his ear
Was the sound of a widow sighing,
And the sweetest sight was the icy tear,
Which Horror froze in the blue eye clear
Of a maid by her lover lying—

As round her fell her long fair hair ;
And she looked to Heaven with that frenzied air
Which seemed to ask if a God were there !
And, stretched by the wall of a ruined hut,
With its hollow cheek, and eyes half shut,
A child of famine dying :
And the carnage begun, when resistance is done,
And the fall of the vainly flying !

10.

"But the Devil has reached our cliffs so white,
And what did he there, I pray ?
If his eyes were good, he but saw by night
What we see every day ;
But he made a tour, and kept a journal
Of all the wondrous sights nocturnal,
And he sold it in shares to the *Men* of the *Row*,
Who bid pretty well — but they *cheated* him, though !

11.

"The Devil first saw, as he thought, the *Mail*,
Its coachman and his coat ;
So instead of a pistol, he cocked his tail,
And seized him by the throat :
'Aha,' quoth he, 'what have we here ?
'Tis a new barouche, and an ancient peer !'

12.

"So he sat him on his box again,
And bade him have no fear,
But be true to his club, and staunch to his rein,
His brothel, and his beer ;
'Next to seeing a lord at the council board,
I would rather see him here.'

17.

"The Devil gat next to Westminster,
And he turned to 'the room' of the Commons ;

But he heard, as he purposed to enter in there,
That 'the Lords' had received a summons;
And he thought, as a '*quondam* aristocrat,'
He might peep at the peers, though to *hear* them were flat:
And he walked up the house, so like one of our own,
That they say that he stood pretty near the throne.

18.

"He saw the Lord L——l seemingly wise,
The Lord W——d certainly silly,
And Johnny of Norfolk — a man of some size —
And Chatham, so like his friend Billy;
And he saw the tears in Lord E——n's eyes,
Because the Catholics would *not* rise,
In spite of his prayers and his prophecies;
And he heard — which set Satan himself a staring —
A certain Chief Justice say something like *swearing*.
And the Devil was shocked — and quoth he, 'I must go,
For I find we have much better manners below.
If thus he harangues when he passes my border,
I shall hint to friend Moloch to call him to order.'"

72. He learned to think more reverently of "the Petrarch" afterward.

73. Poems by Mr. Gally Knight, of which Mr. Murray had transmitted the MS. to Lord Byron, without, however, communicating the name of the author.

74. "Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blühn," etc.

75. Among the imputed plagiarisms so industriously hunted out in his writings, this line has been, with somewhat more plausibility than is frequent in such charges, included, the lyric poet Lovelace having, it seems, written:

"The melody and music of her face."

Sir Thomas Brown, too, in his "Religio Medici," says: "There is music even in beauty," etc. The coincidence, no doubt, is worth observing, and the task of "tracking" thus a favourite writer "in the snow" (as Dryden expresses it) "of

others" is sometimes not unamusing; but to those who found upon such resemblances a general charge of plagiarism, we may apply what Sir Walter Scott says, in that most agreeable work, his "Lives of the Novelists:" "It is a favourite theme of laborious dulness to trace such coincidences, because they appear to reduce genius of the higher order to the usual standard of humanity, and of course to bring the author nearer to a level with his critics."

76. It will be seen, however, from a subsequent letter to Mr. Murray, that he himself was at first unaware of the peculiar felicity of this epithet; and it is therefore, probable, that, after all, the merit of the choice may have belonged to Mr. Gifford.

77. Some doubt had been expressed by Mr. Murray as to the propriety of his putting the name of Cain into the mouth of a Mussulman.

78. Mr. Canning's note was as follows: "I received the books, and, among them, 'The Bride of Abydos.' It is very, very beautiful. Lord Byron (when I met him, one day, at dinner at Mr. Ward's) was so kind as to promise to give me a copy of it. I mention this, not to save my purchase, but because I should be really flattered by the present."

79. "Penrose's Journal," a book published by Mr. Murray at this time.

80. Mr. Murray had offered him a thousand guineas for the two poems.

81. "Penrose's Journal."

82. His first intention had been to go out as a settler, to Botany Bay.

83. When these monthly disbursements had amounted to £70, Ashe wrote to beg that the whole remaining sum of £80 might be advanced to him at one payment, in order to enable him, as he said, to avail himself of a passage to New South Wales, which had been again offered to him. The sum was accordingly, by Lord Byron's orders, paid into his hands.

84. This letter is but a fragment, the remainder being lost.

85. The reader has already seen what Lord Byron himself says, in his journal, on this subject: "What an odd situation and friendship is ours!—without one spark of love on either side," etc.

86. Immediately on the appearance of "The Corsair" (with those obnoxious verses, "Weep, daughter of a royal line," appended to it), a series of attacks, not confined to Lord Byron himself, but aimed also at all those who had lately become his friends, was commenced in the *Courier* and *Morning Post*, and carried on through the greater part of the months of February and March. The point selected by these writers, as a ground of censure on the poet, was one which *now*, perhaps, even themselves would agree to class among his claims to praise, namely, the atonement which he had endeavoured to make for the youthful violence of his Satire by a measure of justice, amiable even in its overflowings, to every one whom he conceived he had wronged.

Notwithstanding the careless tone in which, here and elsewhere, he speaks of these assaults, it is evident that they annoyed him, an effect which, in reading them over now, we should be apt to wonder they could produce, did we not recollect the property which Dryden attributes to "small wits," in common with certain other small animals:

"We scarce could know they live, but that they *bite*."

The following is a specimen of the terms in which these party scribes could then speak of one of the masters of English song: "They might have slept in oblivion with Lord Carlisle's dramas and Lord Byron's poems." "Some certainly extol Lord Byron's poem much, but most of the best judges place his lordship rather low in the list of our minor poets."

87. This ancient housemaid, of whose gaunt and witch-like appearance it would be impossible to convey any idea but by the pencil, furnished one among the numerous instances of Lord Byron's proneness to attach himself to anything, however homely, that had once enlisted his good nature in its behalf, and become associated with his thoughts. He first found this old woman at his lodgings in Bennet Street, where, for a whole season, she was the perpetual scarecrow of his visitors. When, next year, he took chambers in Albany, one of the great advantages which his friends looked to in the change was that they should get rid of this phantom. But,

no; there she was again; he had actually brought her with him from Bennet Street. The following year saw him married, and, with a regular establishment of servants, in Piccadilly; and here, — as Mrs. Mule had not made her appearance to any of the visitors, — it was concluded, rashly, that the witch had vanished. One of those friends, however, who had most fondly indulged in this persuasion, happening to call one day when all the male part of the establishment were abroad, saw, to his dismay, the door opened by the same grim personage, improved considerably in point of habiliments since he last saw her, and keeping pace with the increased scale of her master's household, as a new peruke, and other symptoms of promotion, testified. When asked "how he came to carry this old woman about with him from place to place," Lord Byron's only answer was: "The poor old devil was so kind to me."

88. Part of this passage has been already extracted, but I have allowed it to remain here in its original position, on account of the singularly sudden manner in which it is introduced.

89. He adopted this thought afterward in his "Ode to Napoleon," as well as most of the historical examples in the following paragraph.

90. "As much company," says Pope, "as I have kept, and as much as I love it, I love reading better, and would rather be employed in reading than in the most agreeable conversation."

91. He had made a present of the copyright of "The Corsair" to Mr. Dallas, who thus describes the manner in which the gift was bestowed: "On the 28th of December, I called in the morning on Lord Byron, whom I found composing 'The Corsair.' He had been working upon it but a few days, and he read me the portion he had written. After some observations, he said: 'I have a great mind — I will.' He then added that he should finish it soon, and asked me to accept of the copyright. I was much surprised. He had, before he was aware of the value of his works, declared that he never would take money for them, and that I should have the whole advantage of all he wrote. This declaration became morally void when the question was about thousands, instead of a few hundreds; and I perfectly agree with the admired and admirable

author of 'Waverley' that 'the wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of.' I felt this on the sale of 'Childe Harold,' and observed it to him. The copyright of 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos' remained undisposed of, though the poems were selling rapidly, nor had I the slightest notion that he would ever again give me a copyright. But as he continued in the resolution of not appropriating the sale of his works to his own use, I did not scruple to accept that of 'The Corsair,' and I thanked him. He asked me to call and hear the portions read as he wrote them. I went every morning, and was astonished at the rapidity of his composition. He gave me the poem complete on New Year's day, 1814, saying, that my acceptance of is gave him great pleasure, and that I was fully at liberty to publish it with any bookseller I pleased, independent of the profit."

Out of this last mentioned permission arose the momentary embarrassment between the noble poet and his publisher, to which the above notes allude.

92. It had been at first Genevra, not Francesca, as Mr. Dallas asserts.

93. The first was, of course, the one that I preferred. The other ran as follows:

"January 7, 1814.

"My dear Moore:—I had written to you a long letter of dedication, which I suppress, because, though it contained something relating to you which every one had been glad to hear, yet there was too much about politics, and poesy, and all things whatsoever, ending with that topic on which most men are fluent, and none very amusing—*oneself*. It might have been re-written, but to what purpose? My praise could add nothing to your well-earned and firmly established fame; and with my most hearty admiration of your talents, and delight in your conversation, you are already acquainted. In availing myself of your friendly permission to inscribe this poem to you, I can only wish the offering were as worthy your acceptance as your regard is dear to

"Yours, most affectionately and faithfully,

"Byron."

94. He had at first, after the words "Scott alone," inserted, in a parenthesis, "He will excuse the *Mr.*; 'we do not say *Mr.* Cæsar.'"

95. The amusing rages into which he was thrown by the printer were vented not only in these notes, but frequently on the proof-sheets themselves. Thus, a passage in the dedication having been printed "the first of her bands in estimation," he writes in the margin, "*bards*, not *bands* — was there ever such a stupid misprint?" and, in correcting a line that had been curtailed of its due number of syllables, he says, "*Do not* omit words; it is quite enough to alter or misspell them."

96. His translation of the pretty Portuguese song, "Tu mi chamas." He was tempted to try another version of this ingenious thought, which is, perhaps, still more happy, and has never, I believe, appeared in print.

"You call me still your *life* — ah! change the word —
Life is as transient as th' inconstant's sigh;
Say rather I'm your *soul*, more just that name,
For, like the soul, my love can never die."

97. It will be recollected that he had announced "The Corsair" as "the last production with which he should trespass on public patience for some years."

98. Reprinting the "Hours of Idleness."

99. The printer at Newark.

100. Relative to a proposed reconciliation between Lord Carlisle and himself.

101. Of the Satire.

102. I had endeavoured to persuade him to take a part in parliamentary affairs, and to exercise his talent for oratory more frequently.

103. In concluding my letter, having said "God bless you!" I added, "that is, if you have no objection."

104. The statement of the *Courier*, etc.

105. In asserting that he devoted but four days to the composition of "The Bride," he must be understood to refer only to the first sketch of that poem, the successive additions by which it was increased to its present length having occupied,

as we have seen, a much longer period. "The Corsair," on the contrary, was, from beginning to end, struck off at a heat, — there being but little alteration or addition afterward, — and the rapidity with which it was produced (being at the rate of nearly two hundred lines a day) would be altogether incredible, had we not his own, as well as his publisher's, testimony to the fact. Such an achievement, — taking into account the surpassing beauty of the work, — is, perhaps, wholly without a parallel in the history of genius, and shows that "écrire *par passion*," as Rousseau expresses it, may be sometimes a shorter road to perfection than any that Art has ever struck out.

106. Those bitter and powerful lines which he wrote on the opening of the vault that contained the remains of Henry VIII. and Charles I.

107. He was not yet aware, it appears, that the anonymous manuscript sent to him by his publisher was from the pen of Mr. Knight.

108. The manuscript of a long grave satire, entitled "Anti-Byron," which had been sent to Mr. Murray, and by him forwarded to Lord Byron, with a request — not meant, I believe, seriously — that he would give his opinion as to the propriety of publishing it.

109. I had begun my letter in the following manner: "Have you seen the 'Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte?' I suspect it to be either F—g—d's or Rosa Matilda's. Those rapid and masterly portraits of all the tyrants that preceded Napoleon have a vigour in them which would incline me to say that Rosa Matilda is the person; but then, on the other hand, that powerful grasp of history," etc. After a little more of this mock parallel, the letter went on thus: "I should like to know what *you* think of the matter? Some friends of mine here *will* insist that it is the work of the author of 'Childe Harold,' but then they are not so well read in F—g—d and Rosa Matilda as I am; and, besides, they seem to forget that *you* promised, about a month or two ago, not to write any more for years. Seriously," etc.

I quote this foolish banter merely to show how safely, even on his most sensitive points, one might venture to jest with him.

110. We find D'Argenson thus encouraging Voltaire to break a similar vow: "Continue to write without fear for five and twenty years longer, but write poetry, notwithstanding your oath in the preface to Newton."

111. Mr. Murray had requested of him to make some additions to the ode, so as to save the stamp duty imposed upon publications not exceeding a single sheet; and he afterward added, in successive editions, five or six stanzas, the original number being but eleven. There were also three more stanzas, which he never printed, but which, for the just tribute they contain to Washington, are worthy of being preserved:

"There was a day — there was an hour,
While earth was Gaul's — Gaul thine —
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

"But thou, forsooth, must be a king,
And don the purple vest,
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star — the string — the crest?
Vain froward child of empire, say,
Are all thy playthings snatched away?

"Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the great;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?

Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeathed the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but One!"

112. A poem by Mr. Stratford Canning, full of spirit and power, entitled "Buonaparte." In a subsequent note to Mr. Murray, Lord Byron says: "I do not think less highly of 'Buonaparte' for knowing the author. I was aware that he was a man of talent, but did not suspect him of possessing *all* the *family* talents in such perfection."

113. It was the fear of this sort of back-water current, to which so rapid a flow of fame seemed liable, that led some even of his warmest admirers, ignorant as they were yet of the boundlessness of his resources, to tremble a little at the frequency of his appearances before the public. In one of my own letters to him, I find this apprehension thus expressed: "If you did not write so well, as the royal wit observed, I should say you write too much; at least, too much in the same strain. The Pythagoreans, you know, were of opinion that the reason why we do not hear or heed the music of the heavenly bodies is that they are always sounding in our ears; and I fear that even the influence of *your* song may be diminished by falling upon the world's dull ear too constantly."

The opinion, however, which a great writer of our day (himself one of the few to whom his remark replies) had the generosity, as well as sagacity, to pronounce on this point, at a time when Lord Byron was indulging in the fullest lavishment of his powers, must be regarded, after all, as the most judicious and wise: "But they cater ill for the public," says Sir Walter Scott, "and give indifferent advice to the poet, supposing him possessed of the highest qualities of his art, who do not advise him to labour while the laurel around his brows yet retains its freshness. Sketches from Lord Byron are more valuable than finished pictures from others; nor are we at all sure that any labour which he might bestow in revisal would not rather efface than refine those outlines of striking and powerful originality which they exhibit when flung rough

from the hand of a master." — *Biographical Memoirs, by Sir W. Scott.*

114. To such lengths did he, at this time, carry his enthusiasm for Kean that, when Miss O'Neil soon after appeared, and, by her matchless representation of feminine tenderness, attracted all eyes and hearts, he was not only a little jealous of her reputation, as interfering with that of his favourite, but, in order to guard himself against the risk of becoming a convert, refused to go to see her act. I endeavoured sometimes to persuade him into witnessing, at least, one of her performances, but his answer was (punning upon Shakespeare's word, "unanealed"), "No; I'm resolved to continue *un-Oneiled.*"

To the great queen of all actresses, however, it will be seen, by the following extract from one of his journals, he rendered due justice:

"Of actors, Cooke was the most natural, Kemble the most supernatural, — Kean the medium between the two. But Mrs. Siddons was worth them all put together." — *Detached Thoughts.*

115. An epigram here followed, which, as founded on a Scriptural allusion, I thought it better to omit.

116. We had been invited by Lord R. to dine *after* the play, an arrangement which, from its novelty, delighted Lord Byron exceedingly. The dinner, however, afterward dwindled into a mere supper, and this change was long a subject of jocular resentment with him.

117. I had begged of him to write something for me to set to music.

118. Miss Foote's first appearance, which we witnessed together.

119. In a few days after this, he sent me a long rhyming epistle full of jokes and pleasantries upon everything and every one around him, of which the following are the only parts producible:

"'What say *I?*' — not a syllable further in prose;
I'm your man 'of all measures,' dear Tom, — so, here goes!
Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old Time,
On those buoyant supporters the bladders of rhyme.

If our weight breaks them down, and we sink in the flood,
We are smothered, at least, in respectable mud,
Where the divers of bathos lie drowned in a heap,
And S——'s last pæan has pillowed his sleep ; —
That 'felo de se' who, half drunk with his malmsey,
Walked out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
Singing 'Glory to God' in a spick-and-span stanza,
The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.

"The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
The fêtes, and the gapings to get at these Russes, —
Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman to Hetman, —
And what dignity decks the flat face of the great man.
I saw him, last week, at two balls and a party, —
For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty.
You know, *we* are used to quite different graces,
. . . . . .
The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter and brisker,
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker ;
And wore but a starless blue coat, and in kersey-
mere breeches whisked round in a waltz with the J——,
Who, lovely as ever, seemed just as delighted
With majesty's presence as those she invited."

120. The journal from which I have given extracts in the preceding pages.

121. Mr. Wrangham.

122. A satirical pamphlet, in which all the writers of the day were attacked.

123. He alludes to an action for piracy brought by Mr. Power (the publisher of my musical works), to the trial of which I had been summoned as a witness.

124. Lord Byron afterward proposed that I should make a third in this publication ; but the honour was a perilous one, and I begged leave to decline it.

125. In a note which I wrote to him, before starting, next day, I find the following : "I got 'Lara' at three o'clock this morning ; read him before I slept, and was enraptured. I take the proofs with me."

126. He here refers to an article in the number of the *Edinburgh Review*, just then published (No. 45), on "The Corsair" and "Bride of Abydos."

127. An engraving by Agar from Phillips's portrait of him.

128. Alluding to "Lara."

129. Mr. Hogg had been led to hope that he should be permitted to insert this poem in a miscellany which he had at this time some thoughts of publishing; and whatever advice I may have given against such a mode of disposing of the work arose certainly not from any ill will to this ingenious and remarkable man, but from a consideration of what I thought most advantageous to the fame of Lord Byron.

130. His servant had brought him up a large jar of ink, into which, not supposing it to be full, he had thrust his pen down to the very bottom. Enraged, on finding it come out all smeared with ink, he flung the bottle out of the window into the garden, where it lighted, as here described, upon one of eight leaden Muses, that had been imported, some time before, from Holland, — the ninth having been, by some accident, left behind.

131. It was, if I mistake not, during his recent visit to Newstead, that he himself actually fancied he saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and which he thus describes, from the recollection perhaps of his own fantasy, in "Don Juan:"

> "It was no mouse, but, lo! a monk, arrayed
> In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appeared,
> Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade,
> With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard:
> His garments only a slight murmur made:
> He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
> But slowly; and as he passed Juan by,
> Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye."

It is said that the Newstead ghost appeared, also, to Lord Byron's cousin, Miss Fanny Parkins, and that she made a sketch of him from memory.

132. The reviews and magazines of the month.

133. The following characteristic note, in reference to this passage, appears, in Mr. Gifford's handwriting, on the copy of the above letter: "It is a pity that Lord B. was ignorant of Jonson. The old poet has a satire on the Court Pucelle that would have supplied him with some pleasantry on Johanna's pregnancy."

134. On the day of the arrival of the lady's answer, he was sitting at dinner, when his gardener came in and presented him with his mother's wedding ring, which she had lost many years before, and which the gardener had just found in digging up the mould under her window. Almost at the same moment, the letter from Miss Milbanke arrived, and Lord Byron exclaimed: "If it contains a consent, I will be married with this very ring." It *did* contain a very flattering acceptance of his proposal, and a duplicate of the letter had been sent to London, in case this should have missed him. — *Memoranda.*

135. He had agreed to forfeit these sums to the persons mentioned, should he ever marry.

136. I had frequently, both in earnest and in jest, expressed these hopes to him; and, in one of my letters, after touching upon some matters relative to my own little domestic circle, I added: "This will all be unintelligible to you, though I sometimes cannot help thinking it within the range of possibility that even *you*, volcano as you are, may, one day, cool down into something of the same *habitable* state. Indeed, when one thinks of lava having been converted into buttons for Isaac Hawkins Browne, there is no saying what such fiery things may be brought to at last."

137. Of the lamentable contrast between sentiments and conduct, which this transfer of the seat of sensibility from the heart to the fancy produces, the annals of literary men afford unluckily too many examples. Alfieri, though he could write a sonnet full of tenderness to his mother, never saw her (says Mr. W. Rose) but once after their early separation, though he frequently passed within a few miles of her residence. The poet Young, with all his parade of domestic sorrows, was, it appears, a neglectful husband and harsh father; and Sterne (to use the words employed by Lord Byron) preferred "whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother."

138. It is the opinion of Diderot, in his "Treatise on Acting," that not only in the art of which he treats, but in all those which are called imitative, the possession of real sensibility is a bar to eminence, sensibility being, according to his view, "le caractère de la bonté de l'ame et de la médiocrité du génie."

139. Pope.

140. See Foscolo's essay on Petrarch. On the same principle, Orrery says, in speaking of Swift: "I am persuaded that his distance from his English friends proved a strong incitement to their mutual affection."

141. That he was himself fully aware of this appears from a passage in one of his letters already given: "My sister is in town, which is a great comfort, for, never having been much together, we are naturally more attached to each other."

142. Wife and children, Bacon tells us in one of his essays, are "impediments to great enterprises," and adds, "Certainly, the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men." See, with reference to this subject, chapter xviii. of Mr. D'Israeli's work on "The Literary Character."

143. Milton's first wife, it is well known, ran away from him, within a month after their marriage, disgusted, says Phillips, "with his spare diet and hard study;" and it is difficult to conceive a more melancholy picture of domestic life than is disclosed in his noncupative will, one of the witnesses to which deposes to having heard the great poet himself complain that his children "were careless of him, being blind, and made nothing of deserting him."

144. By whatever austerity of temper or habits the poets Dante and Milton may have drawn upon themselves such a fate, it might be expected that, at least, the "gentle Shakespeare" would have stood exempt from the common calamity of his brethren. But, among the very few facts of his life that have been transmitted to us, there is none more clearly proved than the unhappiness of his marriage. The dates of the birth of his children, compared with that of his removal from Stratford, the total omission of his wife's name in the first draft of his will, and the bitter sarcasm of the bequest by which he

remembers her afterward, — all prove beyond a doubt both his separation from the lady early in life, and his unfriendly feeling toward her at the close of it.

In endeavouring to argue against the conclusion naturally to be deduced from this will, Boswell, with a strange ignorance of human nature, remarks: "If he had taken offence at any part of his wife's conduct, I cannot believe that he would have taken this petty mode of expressing it."

145. In a small book which I have in my possession, containing a sort of chronological history of the Ring, I find the name of Lord Byron, more than once, recorded among the "backers."

146. Doctor Woolriche, an old and valued friend of mine, to whose skill, on the occasion here alluded to, I was indebted for my life.

147. "The Dream."

148. The "Hebrew Melodies," which he had employed himself in writing, during his recent stay in London.

149. I had just been reading Mr. Southey's fine poem of "Roderick," and, with reference to an incident in it, had put the following question to Lord Byron: "I should like to know from *you*, who are one of the philocynic sect, whether it is probable that any dog (out of a melodrame) could recognise a master, whom neither his own mother or mistress was able to find out. I don't care about Ulysses's dog, etc., — all I want is to know from *you* (who are renowned as 'friend of the dog, companion of the bear') whether such a thing is probable."

150. The letter H. is blotted in the MS.

151. It was thus that, according to his account, a certain celebrated singer and actor used frequently to pronounce the word "enthusiasm."

152. Mrs. Mule.

153. Some remark which he told me had been made with respect to the frequent use of the demonstrative pronoun both by himself and by Sir W. Scott.

154. Verses to Lady J—— (containing an allusion to Lord Byron), which I had written, while at Chatsworth, but consigned afterward to the flames.

155. A seal, with the head of Anacreon, which I had given him.

156. I had taken the liberty of laughing a little at the manner in which some of his "Hebrew Melodies" had been set to music.

157. The verses enclosed were those melancholy ones, now printed in his works, "There's not a joy the world can give like those it takes away."

158. The MS. was in the handwriting of Lady Byron.

159. These allusions to "a speech" are connected with a little incident, not worth mentioning, which had amused us both when I was in town. He was rather fond (and had been always so, as may be seen in his early letters) of thus harping on some conventional phrase or joke.

160. He here alludes to a circumstance which I had communicated to him in a preceding letter. In writing to one of the numerous partners of a well-known publishing establishment (with which I have since been lucky enough to form a more intimate connection), I had said confidentially (as I thought), in reference to a poem that had just appeared, "Between you and me, I do not much admire Mr. ———'s poem." The letter, being chiefly upon business, was answered through the regular business channel, and, to my dismay, concluded with the following words: "*We* are very sorry that you do not approve of Mr. ———'s new poem, and are your obedient, etc., L. H. R. O., etc."

161. The death of his infant goddaughter, Olivia Byron Moore.

162. I had accused him of having entirely forgot that, in a preceding letter, I had informed him of my intention to publish with the Messrs. Longman in the ensuing winter, and added that, in giving him this information, I found I had been — to use an elegant Irish metaphor — "whistling jigs to a mile-stone."

163. A few passages at the beginning of these recollections have been omitted, as containing particulars relative to Lord Byron's mother, which have already been mentioned in the early part of this work. Among these, however, there is one anecdote, the repetition of which will be easily pardoned, on

account of the infinitely greater interest as well as authenticity imparted to its details by coming from such an eye-witness as Sir Walter Scott. "I remember," he says, "having seen Lord Byron's mother before she was married, and a certain coincidence rendered the circumstance rather remarkable. It was during Mrs. Siddons's first or second visit to Edinburgh, when the music of that wonderful actress's voice, looks, manner, and person produced the strongest effect which could possibly be exerted by a human being upon her fellow creatures. Nothing of the kind that I ever witnessed approached it by a hundred degrees. The high state of excitation was aided by the difficulties of obtaining entrance and the exhausting length of time that the audience were contented to wait until the piece commenced. When the curtain fell, a large proportion of the ladies were generally in hysterics.

"I remember Miss Gordon of Gight, in particular, harrowing the house by the desperate and wild way in which she shrieked out Mrs. Siddons's exclamation, in the character of Isabella, 'Oh, my Byron! Oh, my Byron!' A well-known medical gentleman, the benevolent Dr. Alexander Wood, tendered his assistance, but the thick-pressed audience could not for a long time make way for the doctor to approach his patient, or the patient the physician. The remarkable circumstance was that the lady had not then seen Captain Byron, who, like Sir Toby, made her conclude with 'Oh!' as she had begun with it."

164. Mr. Murray had, at the time of giving the vase, suggested to Lord Byron that it would increase the value of the gift to add some such inscription, but the feeling of the noble poet on this subject will be understood from the following answer which he returned:

"April 9, 1815.

"Thanks for the books. I have great objection to your proposition about inscribing the vase, which is, that it would appear *ostentatious* on my part, and of course I must send it as it is, without any alteration. Yours," etc.

165. Mr. Murray had presented Lady Byron with twelve drawings, by Stothard, from Lord Byron's poems.

166. This and the following letter were addressed to me in Ireland, whither I had gone about the middle of the preceding month.

167. He had lately become one of the members of the Sub-Committee (consisting, besides himself, of the persons mentioned in this letter) who had taken upon themselves the management of Drury Lane Theatre, and it had been his wish, on the first construction of the Committee, that I should be one of his colleagues. To some mistake in the mode of conveying this proposal to me, he alludes in the preceding sentence.

168. The following is the enclosure here referred to:

"Darlington, June 3, 1815.

"My Lord:—I have lately purchased a set of your works, and am quite vexed that you have not cancelled the 'Ode to Buonaparte.' It certainly was prematurely written, without thought or reflection. Providence has now brought him to reign over millions again, while the same Providence keeps, as it were, in a garrison another potentate, who, in the language of Mr. Burke, 'he hurled from his throne.' See if you cannot make amends for your folly, and consider that, in almost every respect, human nature is the same, in every clime and in every period, and don't act the part of a *foolish boy*. Let not Englishmen talk of the stretch of tyrants, while the torrents of blood shed in the East Indies cry aloud to Heaven for retaliation. Learn, good sir, not to cast the first stone. I remain your lordship's servant, J. R——."

169. Notwithstanding this precaution of the poet, the coincidence in question was, but a few years after, triumphantly cited in support of the sweeping charge of plagiarism brought against him by some scribblers. The following are Mr. Sotheby's lines:

"And I have leapt
In transport from my flinty couch, to welcome
The thunder as it burst upon my roof,
And beckoned to the lightning, as it flashed
And sparkled on these fetters."

I have since been informed by Mr. Sotheby that, though not published, these lines had been written long before the appearance of Lord Byron's poem.

170. Mr. Taylor having inserted in the *Sun* newspaper (of which he was then chief proprietor) a sonnet to Lord Byron, in return for a present which his lordship had sent him of a handsomely bound copy of all his works, there appeared in the same journal, on the following day (from the pen of some person who had acquired a control over the paper), a parody upon this sonnet, containing some disrespectful allusion to Lady Byron; and it is to this circumstance, which Mr. Taylor had written to explain, that the above letter, so creditable to the feelings of the noble husband, refers.

171. It is but justice both to "him that gave and him that took" to mention that the noble poet, at this time, with a delicacy which enhanced the kindness, advanced to the eminent person here spoken of, on the credit of some work he was about to produce, one hundred pounds.

172. A correspondent of one of the monthly miscellanies gives the following account of this incident:

"During Lord Byron's administration, a ballet was invented by the elder Byrne, in which Miss Smith (since Mrs. Oscar Byrne) had a *pas seul*. This the lady wished to remove to a later period in the ballet. The ballet-master refused, and the lady swore she would not dance it at all. The music incidental to the dance began to play, and the lady walked off the stage. Both parties flounced into the greenroom to lay the case before Lord Byron, who happened to be the only person in that apartment. The noble committee-man made an award in favour of Miss Smith, and both complainants rushed angrily out of the room at the instant of my entering it. 'If you had come a minute sooner,' said Lord Byron, 'you would have heard a curious matter decided on by me, — a question of dancing! — by me,' added he, looking down at the lame limb, 'whom Nature, from my birth, has prohibited from taking a single step.' His countenance fell after he had uttered this, as if he had said too much; and for a moment there was an embarrassing silence on both sides."

END OF VOLUME XIII.

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